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## ECUMENISM

### EDITORIAL

THE PRO - ORIENTE SYRIAC COMMISSION AND ECUMENICAL  
DIALOGUE WITH THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

Geevarghese Chediath

GIVE ME THE SEAL

Sophy Rose C.M.C.

THE ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE

George Mathew

THE CATHOLIC CHURCHES OF ORIENTAL TRADITION

John Madey

BOOK REVIEWS, NEWS

Vol. XVIII

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# CHRISTIAN ORIENT

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Theological Thinking

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## ECUMENISM

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## Editorial

Ecumenism is a theological and spiritual task of the one Church of Christ. The expressions 'ecumenism' and 'ecumenical dialogues' are often used to indicate various kinds of Church contacts and common action among christians belonging to different traditions and denominations. By these expressions we are referring to that which helps to describe everything that relates to the whole task of the entire church to bring the Gospel to the whole world. Ecumenism is a growing in togetherness. One of the famous orthodox ecumenist Nikos Nissiotis says: "The Churches must share, shape and reshape their own ecumenism together, searching to perfect it by growing in mutual understanding and respect. One does not become ecumenical only through one's own background and through one's principle alone. It is, perhaps, of the nature of the gift of God that one depends upon the help of other traditions in order to become ecumenical and one grows in ecumenicity only together".

Ecumenism is an authentic approach and a movement. It is the approach of the Gospel message. It is actually the 'way' of the undivided church. Ecumenism covers and expresses the basic existential approach to the Gospel message at all times and in all places. It cannot be limited to and bound by a single system or by an inflexible, authoritarian, and self-centred organization. It cannot be exhausted by a set of fixed principles demanding easy obedience and conformity either. Nissiotis says ecumenism is by its nature, a perpetual and diversified movement ranging from the response to God's calling to be one, to the efforts to serve in all circumstances in the world which seeks moral or material support to face urgent situations of injustice, exploitation and multifarious discrimination as incompatible phenomena with the Gospel.

The Second Vatican Council stresses in a very special way the responsibility and obligation of the Catholic Oriental Churches to share in the mission of the Church Universal in reconciling the separated christians among themselves and in re-establishing their communion according to the will of our Lord. They should promote this "by prayer above all, by their example, by their scrupulous fidelity to the ancient traditions of the East, by a better knowledge of each other, by working together, and by a brotherly attitude towards persons and things" (OE 24). The Decree on Ecumenism truly initiates a new era in ecumenical effort. "The Catholic Church accepts them (the separated brethren) with respect and affection as brothers. For men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized are brought into a certain, though imperfect, communion with the catholic church. Undoubtedly, the differences that exist in varying degrees between them and the Catholic Church - whether in doctrine and sometimes in discipline or concerning



the structure of the Church – do indeed create many and sometimes serious obstacles to full ecclesiastical communion. These the ecumenical movement is striving to overcome” (UR 3). Thus, Vat II is faithful to the past and open to the future in her ecclesiological and ecumenical attitudes and perspectives. It has value as a self-corrective and self critical approach to the onesided tendencies in ecumenical approaches.

The original meaning of ‘ecumenical’ or ‘ecumenicity’ was strictly bound to Christianity united in faith and worship or living the *koinonia*. Apart from its geographical and political implications, these terms have spiritual and religious dimension. The terms catholic, orthodox, universal, ecumenical etc carry this spiritual identity. It is evidently in contradiction to any sort of division and separation. Ecumenism is not an inter – confessional syncretism. What we need is a spiritual ecumenism which transcends all the confessional barriers. It must be a growth from ‘within’ to the outward. The unity of the Church cannot be fully realized unless the disruptive factors cease to operate their dividing role among men. In this way the effort to debate and re-unite christian traditions is linked with the active presence of the church defeating the dividing issues of injustice, exploitation and racial discrimination in the world of today. Church unity is not simply a unity of confessional agreement. It comprises a profound sense of responsibility on the part of the world and a profound sense of responsibility from the part of the Church.

This issue of Christian Orient on Ecumenism brings out scholarly studies expressing the ecumenical consensus from different perspectives. The first article of Prof. Dr. G. Chediath entitled ‘The Pro Oriente Syriac Commission and Ecumenical Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East is a comprehensive historical and theological study on that theme. The author points out that the Pro Oriente brought together theologians of oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. This meeting together enabled to regain an enormous amount of common ground especially in christology. The second part, Ecumenical Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East is insightful and inspiring study on that. The second article by Dr. Sophy Rose is a liturgico - theological study on the Acts of Judas Thomas. Entering deeply into the original text, the author establishes the theological and spiritual importance of the Acts of Thomas with special reference to the mystery of baptism. The author points out the necessity of a reconsideration of the apocryphal literature in its proper theological line. The third article, entitled ‘Anglican - Roman Catholic Dialogue’ is by Rev. Fr. George Mathew. The author clearly analyses the theological, historical and political reasons of the divisions and the subsequent consequences. The author concludes that the Roman Catholics and the Anglicans have entered into a new relationship that looks to the future and seeks to overcome the estrangement of the past. The last one is a data collection on the Catholic Churches of Oriental Tradition by a well known ecumenist, Prof. Dr. John Madey. It is a scientific, systematic and exhaustive presentation of the theme.

**Joseph Kallarangatt**

Editor



# The Pro Oriente Syriac Commission And Ecumenical Dialogue With The Assyrian Church Of The East

Pro Oriente is an Ecumenical Foundation in Vienna / Austria founded by H. E. Cardinal König, the former Archbishop of Vienna, in 1964. Working under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Vienna, Pro Oriente set itself the task of "promoting academic research, publications and all kinds of contacts that may contribute to a better knowledge of the East, especially with a view to serving the cause of a better understanding between Christians of the East and of the West." Pro Oriente brought together for theological consultations theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church in Vienna in 1971, 1973, 1976, 1978 and 1988. These consultations enabled to regain an enormous amount of common ground, first and foremost in the vitally important field of Christology. It began to heal a rift that had existed for more than fifteen centuries. The unofficial Christological agreement arrived at the Pro Oriente Consultations in Vienna is today known as the "Vienna Christological Formulation". This is made use of by Church leaders in the subsequent official bilateral Christological agreement between the Heads of the Churches. Thus we have the Christological Agreements

between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church, between the Catholic Church and the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, and between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Church.<sup>1</sup>

It was the achievement of these discussions that the Catholic Church and the Eastern Churches have discovered the already existing deep bonds of union among them "This has created a new awareness of true Christian fellowship and an atmosphere of mutual confidence from which we may draw hope for a future of complete communion of our Sister Churches". Today Christology is not at all an issue of contention between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches. The unofficial visits arranged by the Pro Oriente helped greatly to increase mutual esteem and confidence.<sup>2</sup>

## The Oriental Catholic Churches

In the early discussions of Pro Oriente with Orthodoxy, the Oriental Catholic Churches were not represented. Dialogue was mainly between the Western Christianity and Eastern Orthodoxy. The Oriental

1 *The Vienna Dialogue Communiqués and Documents-Booklet No. 1.* 1990 Preamble. p. 5.

2 *Ibid.*

Catholic Churches came into full communion with the Catholic Church as a result of the ecumenical discussions held in the past at various periods of history. It was pointed out that in the post Conciliar period when we seek for integral and total Christian communion, it would be a mistake not to include the Eastern Catholic Churches also in today's ecumenical discussions. As a result of this awareness regarding the integral full communion of all the churches, the Oriental Catholic Churches also participate today actively in the ecumenical discussions. Thus in the Pro Oriente discussions these Catholics also take part together with their Western brethren.

### Churches of the Syriac Tradition

There are three major ancient traditions in the Christian World, namely Syriac, Greek and Latin. Our Lord and His Apostles and the early followers spoke Syriac or the various dialects of Aramaic. During the first stage of its expansion, the church spread among the Semitic population through the medium of Syriac. Thus in today's Eastern and South Eastern Turkey, Armenia, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine, Jordan, Iraq and parts of Iran and Arabia the spreading of the Good News was through the medium of Syriac language. There were several churches including the ancient church of the Thomas Christians in India, which

used Syriac in their liturgies for several centuries. There are still churches which use Syriac partly in their liturgies. This is true of the churches in India, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey and Iraq. His Holiness Pope John Paul II called once this Syriac Church as the *First Church*. He called the Greek Church the Second Church and the Latin Church the Third Church.

The Centre of the Syriac Christianity in antiquity was Antioch, the Capital of the Roman Province Oriens (East) and the third major city in the Roman Empire. Later Antioch was the capital of Syria for long.\* Another centre of Syriac Christianity was Edess in Mesopotamia. Edessa is called today Urfa and it is in Turkey, as is Antakya the ancient Antioch. The third Centre was Cranganore in Malankara/Kerala. So there were three centres for the Syriac Christianity, namely Antiochene, Mesopotamian and Indian. Syriac language in liturgical usage had two variations: West Syriac (Antiochene), East Syrian (Mesopotamian and Indian). This variation originated only in the subsequent centuries.

After the Arian crisis, one notices divisive forces working in the Syriac Christianity in Syria. It took a new shape after the Ephesene crisis of 431 and the Chalcedonian crisis of 451. After the Council of Chalcedon in 451 the vast majority of the Syriac speaking population in the country side in Syria moved to

3 Today no Patriarch is residing in Antakya (ancient Antioch). There are also no bishops. There is a chapel of the Latin Catholic Church and a priest who takes care of a few Latin Christians there. There are no Syrian Orthodox, or Greek Orthodox Christians there today. The five Antiochene Patriarchs live elsewhere in Syria and Lebanon. Antioch has lost all its importance for Christians today. Antioch is today a Turkish town, the capital of the Hatai Province.



the anti-Chalcedonian camp and eventually it divided the Syriac Christianity into two definite camps namely, Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians. The Syrians in Mesopotamia were accused of Nestorianism and were called Nestorians while the Syrians who followed Severus of Antioch and Jacob Burdai were called Severians or Jacobites. And in the subsequent centuries, the divisions in West Asia Among the Syriac population entered among the Thomas Christians in India also.

There are today eight churches of the Syriac tradition in three groupings:

(1) West Syriac:	1. Syrian Catholic Church of Antioch - 109,000 faithful	
	2. Maronite Church - 3,304,000	faithful.
	3. Syrian Orthodox - 300,000	"
(2) Mesopotamian	4. Chaldean Church - 600,000	"
	5. Assyrian Church - 400,000	"
(3) Indian :	6. Syro - Malabar - 3,155,000	"
	7. Malankara Catholic - 300,000	"
	8. Malankara Orthodox - 1,500,000	"
<hr/> Total faithful		9,668,000

In the Assyrian Church of the East there is a small group which follows the ancient Julian Calendar. They have a Patriarch of their own. Among the eight Churches, the Syrian Catholic, Maronite, Syro-Malabar and Malankara Catholic Churches are in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church. The Mar Thoma Church in Kerala is also part of the ancient Church of the Thomas Christians. Since they have made corrections in the Syriac liturgical texts in the light of Protestant theology and do not respect the Syriac tradition suffi-

And for centuries these various factions of the Syriac Church lived in isolation and mutual mistrust. Although they had a glorious tradition of the Fathers in the early periods they could not contribute substantially to the World Christianity later. Pro Oriente tried to bring together these churches of the Syriac tradition and it is unique in the history of Christianity that these churches come together. And it is indeed a great achievement of Pro Oriente.

ciently, many do not consider them as Syriac. So also the Thozhiyoor church in Kerala. They may be less than 10,000. These two churches are not included at present in the Pro Oriente Syriac Commission.

### The Syriac Commission

The Syriac Commission was formed in 1994. The official representatives of the above mentioned eight churches and the members of the Pro Oriente foundation are the members of the Syriac Commission.

The following are the members of this commission:

**A. Catholic :**

- 1 Archbishop Mikhael al-Jamil, Syrian Catholic.
- 2 Archbishop Boulos Youssef Matar, Maronite.
- 3 Archbishop Mar Joseph Powathil, Syro-Malabar.
- 4 Fr. Geevarghese Chediath, Malankara Catholic.
- 5 Fr. Louis Sako, Chaldean

**B. Assyrian :**

- 6 Bishop Mar Bawai Soro.
- 7 Metropolitan Mar Aprem, Trichur.
- 8 Fr. Joseph Eshai (Old Calendar).

**C. Oriental Orthodox :**

- 9 Archbishop Mar Gregorios, Syrian Orthodox.
- 10 Fr. K. M. George, Malankara Orthodox.

**D. Pro Oriente (Catholic):**

- 11 Franciscus Cardinal König
- 12 President Alfred Stirnemann
- 13 Mons. Philipp Harnoncourt, Graz
- 14 Fr. Frans Bouwen, Jerusalem
- 15 Prof. Peter Hofrichter, Salzburg.

There were already seven meetings of the Syriac Commission since its formation in September 1994 at Kaslik/Labanon. This commission is the unique platform for the Syriac Churches to come together and to discuss the matters pertaining to the Syriac Culture and

Heritage. It enables these churches to exchange their views on various issues and it helps these churches to come closer for full communion. After centuries of separation these churches try to rediscover the Syriac heritage which is common to all of them. |

**Ecumenical Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East**

The Church in the Mesopotamian region was formerly known as the Nestorian Church. But the members of that church called themselves the Church of the East, and repudiated the appellation Nestorian. This church was outside the Roman empire. During the 16th century, a group of this church entered into full communion with the Catholic Church. The remaining group calls itself today the Assyrian Church of the East. Today this church is found in Iraq, Iran and in the other West Asian countries, in the United States of America, Europe and Australia.

In the post-conciliar ecumenical discussions, the Assyrian Church did not have any part to play. There was no attempt to bring them to the ecumenical sphere and to initiate a dialogue with them. The present writer in his doctoral thesis argued for their inclusion in today's ecumenical discussions.<sup>4</sup> And in the "Kottayam Regional Symposium" under the auspices of the Pro Oriente Foundation the same demand was raised once again: "Should we not also consider the Christology of the Persian Church, if we want to come to

4 G. Chediath, *The Christology of Mar Babai the Great*, Kottayam, 1982, p. 156-7.



an agreement as she also was of an ancient tradition such as the Byzantine one and has developed a Christological tradition such as every other church".<sup>5</sup> Several others also expressed the same sentiments. As a result the Pro Oriente Foundation took up the Assyrian question and initiated a dialogue with them. The platform they chose was the churches of the Syriac tradition. In 1994 the Syriac Commission was formed and the members concentrated on the Christology of the Assyrian Church of the East.

Following were the fundamental questions to be tackled:

- 1 Is there Nestorian Heresy in the present day Assyrian Church?
- 2 Did Nestorius himself teach the Nestorian Heresy?
- 3 How to deal with the *Anathemata* pronounced by Synods on Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius of Constantinople, two Greek Doctors venerated by the Assyrian Church?

So far there were three Syriac Consultations and in each of these Consultations there were about 60 participants. They were invited from the eight Syriac Churches, and from the Latin Church; there were also experts on the Assyrian questions and observers from other churches such as the Coptic Orthodox and Armenian Orthodox churches and the Mar Thoma Church in India and the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. At the very outset the Assyrian Church expressed their dissatisfaction

at the appellation "Nestorian". The two branches of the Mesopotamian Syriac Church proposed a common name for their church, "the Assyro-Chaldean Church of the East". During the discussions it became clear that one should distinguish between, "Nestorianism", "the teaching of Nestorius the Patriarch of Constantinople", and "the Christology of the Church of the East (Assyrian Church)".

### First Consultation in Vienna (1994)

The following were the topics discussed in the first consultation:

- 1 The Vienna Dialogue between Catholic and non-Chalcedonian Theologians and Its Treatment of Nestorius and Nestorianism (Mr. Alfred Stirnemann).
- 2 The Vienna Christological Formula in an Assyrian Perspective (Mar Bawai and Mar Aprem)
- 3 The History of Research into Nestorius (Prof. L. Abramowski)
- 4 The Church of the East in the Sassanian Empire and Its Absence from the Councils in the Roman Empire (Prof. Sebastian Brock)
- 5 Three Synods, Two Ecclesiologies of the Church of the East (S. Jammo)
- 6 The Spread of the person Church (J.M. Fiey)
- 7 The Christology of Nestorius (B. Dupuis)
- 8 Is the Theology of the Church of the East Nestorian? (Mar Bawai, A. Davids, Mar Aprem)



- 9 The Chaldean Church on the Christological controversy (Archbishop Delly)
- 10 The Theological Contribution of Mar Babai the Great (Prof. G. Chediath).
- 11 The Anaphora of Addai and Mari (S. Jammo, Pro. Hofrichter).<sup>6</sup>

There were fifteen learned papers on 11 topics, followed by discussions. Mr. Stirnemann made it clear that (a) different formulations can exist within one church and can be regarded as orthodox even by those who do not use them in their theological tradition. (b) instead of just reinterpreting the terminology and the expressions of the fifth century, it is essential to redefine the mystery of our faith in terms of the concepts of contemporary philosophy and theology and to use a modern language. (c) in this effort the different traditions have stressed the unity or duality. Both attempts were considered orthodox as long as the stress on unity or duality in the incarnate Christ did not deny the other aspect".<sup>7</sup>

Mar Bawai in his paper observed that the "Vienna Christological Formulae reflects the apostolic teaching that is compatible to the theology of the Church of the East, though the terminology of some of its segments poses some linguistic difficulties. In future formulae, it is recommended that a distinction be made between the "content" and "form" of our common faith. We affirm that dogmatic

unity in pluralistic expression should go hand in hand with reconciliation and ecclesial unity. There needs be tolerance of the concept of pluralistic dogmatic expression in 'one faith'.<sup>8</sup>

Prof. S. Brock in his paper remarked that, "we need to try to understand what writers actually meant by the technical terms they used, rather than rely on what their opponents claimed that they meant. Several of the key terms used in the Chalcedonian Definition meant rather different things to different people at different times. It is also important to be aware of the varying starting points of the different Christological traditions".<sup>9</sup>

#### Second Consultation in Vienna(1996) :

The following were the topics discussed in the second consultation:

- 1 Summary of the Christological debate in the five Vienna Consultations and its Applicability to the Dialogue with the Assyrian Church of the East (F. Bouwen, Mar Aprem)
- 2 Comments to and Receptions of the Common Christological Declaration between John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV (Mar Gregorios, Mar Matar, Mar Bawai).
- 3 Does Ephesus Unite or Divide? (Mar Severios, Louis Sako, Elie Khalifé, Mar Bawai)

6 *Syriac Dialogue, I* (first non official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition, Pro Oriente, Vienna, 1994, p. 3.

7 *Syriac Dialogue, II* (second non official Consultation), Vienna, 1996, p. 203.

8 *Ibid.* p. 207.

9 *Ibid.* p-212.



- 4 The Three Chapters Controversy (Prof. G. Chediath, M.J. Birnie, Mar Gregorios Saliba, Prof. Vincenzo Poggi)
- 5 East Syrian Liturgy as an expression of Christology (Baby Varghese, Prof. J. Madey, Prof. P. Youssef, M.J. Birnie)

There were 17 learned papers on five topics and at the end there was a joint communiqué as in the first Consultation, it was made clear that there were several Christological formulations in Christian antiquity, such as Alexandrian, Antiochene and Mesopotamian. One should be able to understand each Christology in its context, No Christology should be considered as normative for criticising other christologies.

Between the first and the Second consultations two events of greatest significance, as far as the Assyrian Church of the East was concerned, had taken place: on November 11, 1994 a common declaration of faith had been issued in Rome by Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Mar Dinkha IV, and then only a few days later that month, the Executive Council of the Middle East Council of Churches was requested by the MECC's sixth General Assembly to set in motion the process for receiving the Assyrian Church of the East into full membership of the MECC. This was duly effected in 1995.<sup>10</sup>

In the joint communiqué it was stated: "Thanks to the spirit of openness

and mutual respect, and with the firm conviction of the necessity of remaining loyal to our respective Traditions, we were able to explore ways towards gaining a truer understanding of each other's traditions and putting away past and present misconceptions on all sides. It became clear in particular, in the course of our dialogue, that there is a necessity to make an absolute distinction between the doctrinal position of the Assyrian Church of the East and the position recognized by all to be heretical, which holds that there are two Sons, two prosopa, in the one Incarnate Christ, a position which is traditionally described by the Chalcedonians and Oriental Orthodox as "Nestorianism".<sup>11</sup>

It was also made clear that the East Syrian understanding of the Christological terms such as Kyana, Qnoma and Parsopa is different from the West Syrian understanding. The joint communiqué says: "The following explanation of the term of "Qnoma" has been presented by the Assyrian, Chaldean and Syro-Malabar delegations of the Church of the East: In Christology, as expressed in the synodical and liturgical sources of the Church of the East, the term qnoma does not mean hypostasis as understood in Alexandrine Tradition, but instead, individuated nature. Accordingly, the human nature which the Holy Spirit fashioned and the Logos assumed and united to Himself without any separation, was personalized in the Person of the Son of God. When we speak of two natures and their qnome, we understand

<sup>10</sup> *Syriac Dialogue*, 2, p. 222-223.

<sup>11</sup> *Syriac Dialogue* 2, p. 193.



this very much in the same sense as two natures and their particular properties. It is important to note that the term *qnoma* is used in a different way in Trinitarian theology".<sup>12</sup>

The communiqué continues, "We recognize that the aim of our dialogue is *not* to require that any of us should reconsider the Christological doctrine of their own tradition, but *rather*, that each of us, while remaining completely true to our own tradition, should come to perceive that the christological teaching of the other Syriac traditions when understood correctly, represents a legitimate expression of our common faith in the one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the mystery of whose Incarnation can never be exhaustively formulated in words".<sup>13</sup>

### Third Consultation in Chicago (1997)

The third consultation took place in Chicago in July 1997 at the invitation of the Assyrian Patriarch Mar Dinkha IV and the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, Catholic Archbishop of Chicago. At Chicago there are about 70,000 Assyrians. The following were the topics discussed:

- 1 The Person and Teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and the Relationship between him, his Teaching and the Church of the East with a special reference to the Three chapters Controversy.

- 2 The Person and Teaching of Nestorius of Constantinople with a special reference to his condemnation at the Council of Ephesus.

3. Studies on Anathemata and their lifting in relationship to the question of Ecclesial Communion and Heresy.

There were eight papers followed by discussions, and a joint communiqué was issued at the end of the Consultation. The Assyrian delegation informed that their Synod made a decision to remove from their liturgical books the anathemata and condemnations voiced against such figures as Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria and Patriarch Severus of Antioch. They informed also that their Synod would soon inaugurate a bilateral programme and agenda to bring about the full ecclesial union of the two churches.

The following resolution was adopted by the joint communiqué: "We all agree that it is time to reevaluate the anathema imposed on Theodore's person and works at the Second Council of Constantinople in 553. We recommend that our churches consider whether they could remove the anathema from their memories". Regarding Nestorius the joint communiqué said, "In regard to the Person and works of Nestorius, we wish that a distinction should be made between the Person of Nestorius, his faith and his pastoral concern on the one hand, and the heresy called "Nestorianism" on the other. Furthermore, we take notice of the fact

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Syriac Dialogue*, 2, p. 193.



that the Assyrian Church of the East had no part in the Christological controversies in which Nestorius was involved. Patriarch Nestorius is not the founder of the Church of the East, as is often assumed, nor one of its hierarchs, but he became one of their honored teachers. Regarding the issue of anthemata of the past, we dedicate ourselves to the search for appropriate ways to lift them especially from the liturgical texts, as an act of love and mutual respect. We propose that our several churches undertake to rewrite our histories of the Christological controversies that have separated us, with a view to removing the language of invective used in the past against fathers and teachers whose views cannot be fully endorsed by all. Furthermore, we agree not to use polemical language in our descriptions of persons, institutions, and doctrinal formulae of our sister churches".

"With regard to the expression, Theotokos and Christotokos, we agree to respect the preferred usage of each community since we now realize that these terms can express the same apostolic faith".<sup>14</sup>

During the Consultation the Syrian Orthodox and the Assyrian delegation informed the decision of their churches to appoint a bilateral commission to explore ways to bring about a rapprochement between their churches.<sup>15</sup>

### Assyrian Catholic Ecumenical Relation

The Assyrian Church entered into Ecumenical Relation with the Catholic Church only recently. After preliminary discussions it was found that both the churches are professing the same faith regarding Christology. So on 11 November 1994 Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Mar Dinkha signed a joint Christological agreement in Vatican: "This meeting resolved an ancient misunderstanding which has kept the two churches at a distance from one another for 1500 years".<sup>16</sup>

Relevant parts of the declaration: "Our Lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man, perfect in his divinity and perfect in his humanity, consubstantial with the Father and consubstantial with us in all things but sin. His divinity and his humanity are united in one person, without confusion or change without division or separation. In him has been preserved the differences of the natures of divinity and humanity, with all their properties, faculties and operations. But far from constituting "one and another", the divinity and the humanity are united in the person of the same and unique Son of God and Lord Jesus Christ, who is the object of a single adoration. Christ therefore is not an ordinary man whom God adopted in order to reside in him and inspire him, as in the righteous ones and the prophets.

14 From the joint communique of the Third Pro Oriente non Official Syriac Consultation.

15 *Ibid.*

16 *Syriac Dialogue 2*, p. 198.



But the same God the word, begotten of his Father before all worlds without beginning according to his divinity, was born of a mother without a father in the last times according to his humanity".<sup>17</sup>

With the signing of this agreement and with the Pro Oriente discussions the

Assyrian Church of the East has entered into a new stage of its history. The present day leaders of the Assyrian Church are very open minded and first-rate ecumenists who seek solely the will of Christ, the Captain of our Salvation, to be realised in their church in our own life time itself.

Geevarghese Chediath

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17 *The Messenger* (Official Organ of the Assyrian Church), No. 11, 1995, March, 31, p. 7-10,

# “Give me the Seal”

## THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE BAPTISMAL TEXTS OF THE ACTS OF THOMAS

### Introduction

There is an increasing interest among the modern scholars in the study of early Christian literature in order to find out the Christian doctrines and theological visions of the early Church. Here is an attempt of the same wave in order to perceive the baptismal doctrine of the Syriac Churches. We make this study in the light of the baptismal texts found in the *Acts of Thomas*,<sup>1</sup> an apocryphal work.<sup>2</sup> Although apocryphal books are not included in the Canon of the Church, they provide the theological milieu of that period of the Church.<sup>3</sup> They open

the hidden theological world which contains the Christian doctrines, theological perceptions and thought patterns of that particular Church in which they are formed. They can be considered as the pre-dogmatic and doctrinal treatises. They occupy a considerable place in manifesting the doctrinal position of the early Christianity. They are also important to know the tendencies, customs and practices of the early Church.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, they have exercised an influence so great and so extensive, that no one who cares about the history of Christian thought can possibly afford to neglect them.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, in view of grasping the theological and

- 1 The *Acts of Thomas* are the only apocryphal Acts of which we possess the complete text. They were written in Syriac in the first half of the 3rd century. The author most probably belonged to the sect of Bardaisan at Edessa. The Acts picture Thomas, one of the twelve, as missionary and apostle of India and his adventures and experiences in detail. J. Quasten, *Patrology*, Vol. 1 (Westminster: 1993) 139. For an English translation and commentary, see, A. F. J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas: Introduction: Text, Commentary* (Leiden: 1962). (Here after we use AT). For a Malayalam translation, G. Chediya & S. Karippai, *Mar Thomayude Nadapadikal* (Kottayam: 1984).
- 2 For an understanding of the historical and theological setting of this book, see, J. Kallarangatt, “The Acts of Thomas Deserve More Theological and Ecclesiological Attention” *Christian Orient*, Vol. 17 (1996) 3–18.
- 3 For an understanding of the theological importance of Apocryphal Writings, see, W. Rordorf, “Terra Incognita Recent Research on Christian Apocryphal Literature, especially on Some Acts of Apostles” in *Studia Patristica* 25 (1993) 142–158.
- 4 J. Quasten, *Patrology*, Vol. I, 106.
- 5 M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: 1924) xiii.



doctrinal insights of the Syriac Church concerning baptism, we approach the AT 'which contains several liturgical hymns'.<sup>6</sup>

### Doctrines Implied

Although the AT is an apocryphal book, and it contains some gnostic tendencies, especially with regard to marriage and sexual relations, it is thoroughly biblical. Its literary genre resembles those of the biblical writings.<sup>7</sup> The prayers, confessions, doxologies, exhortations, sacramental actions, symbolic figures, expressions etc. that it contains are biblically rooted. This itself shows the Syriac flavour of this book since one of the main characteristics of Syriac theological tradition is its Semitic flavour and Bible rootedness.<sup>8</sup> Its vision concerning the Bible itself is that "... it was Jesus the Messiah of whom the Scriptures spoke and whose types and mysteries and likenesses the Law and Prophets showed

forth".<sup>9</sup> This book contains the fundamental Christian doctrines-even dogmas-such as faith in one God,<sup>10</sup> in Trinity,<sup>11</sup> the divinity and humanity in one person of Christ<sup>12</sup> and in the Holy Spirit.<sup>13</sup> It also speaks on the creation, fall of man, the promise of a Saviour, the salvific activities of the redeemer, in short, the salvific plan of God and its accomplishment.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the numerous Christological titles found in this book are so rich;<sup>15</sup> the eschatological vision of Christian life in it is so vivid; its many sided vision of the Church is so deep; the consciousness of the privileged state of the Apostle that it provides is so strong and the missionary zeal that we find in it is so exciting. Nevertheless, we see a rather developed and deep sacramental doctrine in it, especially on the sacraments of initiation-baptism, confirmation and the eucharist.<sup>16</sup> The theological principle that

6 J. Quasten, *Patrology*, Vol. I, 139.

7 E. Junod, "Apocryphes du NT ou Apocryphes chretiens anciens?" *Etudes theologiques et religieuses* 20 (1983) 412.

8 S. P. Brock, *Syriac Fathers on Prayer* (Kalamazoo: 1987) xi.

9 Act VI, 59. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 96.

10 Act III, 33. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 81.

11 Act I, 7, 27; IV, 39; VIII, 70; X, 121; XII, 149 etc.

12 Act I, 10. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 70.

13 Act II, 27; V, 50, 52; XII, 149 etc.

14 See for instance, Act. III, 34.

15 For a detailed understanding, see the following numbers in the AT: 10, 19, 25, 33, 34, 38, 39, 47, 48, 53, 59, 60, 70, 80, 81, 88, 104, 139, 153, 158, and 169.

16 The main studies on these sacraments based on AT are, Klijn, "Baptism and Eucharist" in his *Acts of Thomas*, 54-61; "Baptism in the Acts of Thomas" in J. Vellian (ed), *Studies on Syrian Baptismal Rites* (Syrian Churches Series, 6) (Kottayam: 1973) 57-62; A. Mikloschazy, *East-Syrian Eucharistic Pneumatology* (Roma: 1968) 34-58; J. Chalassery, *The Holy Spirit and Christian Initiation* (Rome: 1995) 23-34.

we find in it is a profound pneumatological Christology.<sup>17</sup> Although the above said doctrines and themes are good for theological reflection, in the following pages we concentrate only on baptism. Our study has two parts: in the first part we will point out certain theological insights related to the baptismal texts in the light of the Scripture and in the second part we will bring out the theological principle that is underlined in the very order of its baptismal practice.

### Texts and Contexts

The context that speaks of baptism in the *AT* is precisely Thomas' gospel ministry. He conveyed the message of the Son of God, those who are attracted by that message accepted it and became ready to receive baptism. Nevertheless, the texts that we deal with and analyse are some vivid narrations of the author that came out of either from his faith experience or what he understood from the real practice of the Church of that time.<sup>18</sup> There are five clear instances that speak of baptism in the *AT*. They are Act 11, 26; V, 49; X, 121, 132; XIII, 157. It is through the analysis of these baptismal texts and the related passages that we bring out the sacramental doctrine of the Syriac Churches concerning baptism.

## Part. I: Theological Meaning of Baptism

### 1. Baptism: an Act of Faith

Baptism is an act of faith. According to Moses bar Kepha, true faith is the beginning of all the Christian mysteries.<sup>19</sup> To confess the faith before receiving baptism is an acceptable practice today. We have certain evidences in the *AT* to this age old custom. The first instance that speaks of it is the context or the request for receiving the sign (Baptism) by King Gundaphar and his brother in order to acquire the "palace" found in heaven. But the apostle wanted to create faith in them. Because, as we understand from another context, only those who have faith in the Messiah will be made worthy of His holy Mysteries. **"...If you really believest in Him, He will make worthy of His holy mysteries; and will exalt thee, and enrich thee, and renew thy mind, and make thee an heiress in His Kingdom".**<sup>20</sup> The holy mysteries that are offered here are the baptism and eucharist. Faith is the pre-requisite to receive these mysteries. At the same time they are the mysteries that deepen our faith. So the apostle prays for them and make the confession

17 For a contemporary understanding on Pneumatological Christology, See, N. A. Nissiotis, "Pneumatological Christology as a Pre-supposition of Ecclesiology", *Oecumenica* 2 (1967) 235 - 251; P. Rosato, "Spirit Christology: Ambiguity and Promise" *Theological Studies* 38 (1977) 423-449; J. D. Zizioulas, "Christ Spirit and the Church" in *Being as Communion* (London: 1985) 123-142.

18 P. Meyendorff, "Eastern Liturgical Theology" in B. Mc Ginn et alii (eds), *Christian Spirituality Origin to the twelfth Century* (New York: 1988) 351.

19 K. A. Aytoun, "The Mystery of Baptism by Moses bar Kepha compared with the Odes of Solomon" in J. Vellian (ed), *Studies on Syrian Baptismal Rites*, 7.

20 Act XIV, 136. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 137.



of faith 'for them' in the form of a prayer. That prayer of Judas was a purely Christological one where he acknowledges that Jesus the Messiah alone is the God of truth and whose mercy is upon man for ever. The prayer is as follows:

I praise Thee, our Lord Jesus the Messiah, who art alone the God of truth and there is no other, and Thou knowest whatever man does not know. Thou, whose mercy is upon man, whom Thou hast willed and made - and they have forgotten Thee, but Thou hast not neglected them....<sup>21</sup>

The prayer of Judas Thomas at this context is an act of confession for the candidates who are going to be baptised and to be in union with His fold. This indicates the necessity of making confession by every catechumen before baptism. What they have to confess is the truth that Jesus is the Messiah and He alone is the God of truth and there is no other; secondly, they should acknowledge that God is merciful. Eventhough they have forgotten Him, He will not neglect them.<sup>22</sup> In other words, to believe that Jesus is the Lord and God and His love

is merciful; and it is a pre-requisite for receiving baptism. Baptism is therefore a sign of one's acknowledgement of Jesus as the loving Saviour, who shows mercy towards all, inspite of our infidelity and forgetfulness. According to the Scriptures, fidelity<sup>23</sup> and merciful love<sup>24</sup> are the basic qualities of the Covenant God.<sup>25</sup> And it is well revealed and fulfilled in the NT. In Jn 1:17 we read: "...grace (*charis*) and truth (*aletheia*) come through Jesus Christ". In baptism, one acknowledges this basic truth concerning God. God is faithful<sup>26</sup> and is love<sup>27</sup>. These intrinsic qualities of God are the driving force behind every one to receive baptism. However, baptism is the realization of faith and it effects the entry of man into the new covenant accomplished by Christ.<sup>28</sup> It is in Him that God's fidelity or truthfulness and gracious love are personified as the saviour of the world (Jn 3:16). The creedal formula of the early Church, "Jesus is the Lord" too is an expression of this fundamental truth. Thus, the prayer of Judas Thomas was an expression of the faith of the early Church and the baptism he has given was an act of faith.

21 Act. II, 25. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 77.

22 Act. II, 25. Klijn *Acts of Thomas*, 76.

23 *Emeth* (Heb) = *aletheia* (GK) = truth, faithfulness. Its root is 'amen. F. Brown (ed), *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: 1951) 54.

24 *Hesed* (Heb). = *Charis* (Gk) = grace, kindness, goodness, F. Brown (ed), *A Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 338.

25 J. L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible* (Bangalore: 1983) 267.

26 1 Thes 5:24; 2 Tim 2:13.

27 1 Jn 4:8.

28 J. Pathrapankal, *Metanoia, Faith Covenant* (Bangalore: 1971) 265.

## 2 Baptism as Receiving of the "Seal"<sup>29</sup>

In the *AT* the baptism is called as "seal"<sup>30</sup> and the sealing is done with the oil.<sup>31</sup> The oil is presented here as the symbol of the Spirit.<sup>32</sup> Hence we can say, through baptism one is sealed with the Holy Spirit. This can be very well interpreted in the light of Pauline theology. According to St. Paul, those who believed in Christ and accepted the Gospel of salvation are sealed with the Holy Spirit. The seal is therefore the Holy Spirit. See what Paul says: "...in him (Christ) you also, who have heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory" (Eph 1:13-14). This seal or the Holy Spirit is therefore the guarantee for our heavenly inheritance. The book of Revelation speaks of those

sealed ones who are made worthy to enjoy the marriage feast of the Lamb. The sealed ones had the name of the Lamb and His Father on their forehead.<sup>33</sup> This has an allusion in the book of Ezekiel 9:4. Baptism is therefore the sign of salvation; at the same time it is the door to the state of Salvation. One experiences the heavenly riches in anticipation through it. It is an entry into the paradise. The seal is a mark to distinguish the chosen ones; only those who have the brand of the Lamb are considered worthy to dwell in heaven with the Lamb. That is why they—the king Gundaphar and his brother—asked the apostle to give them the 'sign'. We read the mind of them as follows: "Our souls are turned to God to receive the sign for we have heard that all the sheep of that God, whom thou preacheest are known to Him by the sign".<sup>34</sup> Again another figure in the *AT*, Sifur says;

29 The Syriac word is *rushma*, means "set a mark" or "sign". The translation "seal" according to some scholars is misleading. Because, the Syriac word for "to seal" is *hatma*. Nevertheless, it also means "sign". J. P. Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford: 1993) 163. The *Thesaurus Syriacus* tells that *rushma* means either baptism or a sealing with the sign of the cross. R. P. Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus II* (Oxford: 1901) c. 3988. Etymologically, the word may be interpreted as standing for the whole rite of baptism. After analysing the baptismal texts in the light of the Syrian and Greek version, Klijn says that "the first seal was probably meant to be the whole rite including the baptism with water". Klijn, "Baptism in the Acts of Thomas", 60.

30 For Further understanding on the "seal". see, G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* (London: 1951) 90-91, 187-189.

31 Act II, 26&27 speak of two important facts.

32 This is very clearly presented in the writings of Ephrem and Narsai. Cfr. Ephrem, *Hymn on Epiphany*, 3:14; *Hymn on Virginity*, 7:6 etc. Narsai, *Liturgical Homilies*, XXII, 42; Moses bar Kepha *Exposition on the Holy Mysteries of Baptism*, 13.

33 Rev. 14:1.

34 Act II, 26, Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 77. cfr. also, Act X, 131, Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 135.



I and my daughter and my wife will henceforth live purely, in one mind and in one love; and we beg that we may receive the sign from thy hands, and may become true servants unto our Lord, and may be reckoned among the number of His flock and His Sheep.<sup>35</sup>

### 3 Seal: A Sign of Salvation

Again, we have the request of a woman, who was under the slavery of Satan, to give her the “seal” (sign) of the Lord” so that the enemy may not again come back upon her.<sup>36</sup> This idea is often found.<sup>37</sup> The intention of the receiver of baptism here is to get protection from the enemy. This turns our attention to another aspect of baptism. Baptism is a sign of protection, a protection from the evil powers that destroy life. Similar idea we see in Narsai.<sup>38</sup>

An armour is the oil with which earth-born are anointed that they may not be captured by the evil spirits in the hidden warfare. It is the great brand of the King of kings with which they are stamped, that they may serve as soldiers in the spiritual contest ....By the hand of the priest-

hood they make a covenant with Divinity, that they will not again return to Satan by their doings.”

Hence it is ultimately a sign of salvation; a sign by which the devil knows that man belongs to God. Evangelist John compares evil with darkness and salvation with light. The former leads to death and the latter leads to life. According to Paul, in order to resist the evil powers, one has to “Put on the armour of Light” (Rom 13:12) “put on the armour of God” (Eph 6:11) who is “Light” (1 Jn 1:5). Paul describes further the weapons of God in Eph 6:11-18. But how can one “put on the armour of light/God”? Here we again depend on Paul. According to him, baptism is “putting on Christ”. As we know from the Scripture, [Jesus Christ is the true light. He is the light of the world (Jn 8:12). By putting on Christ, we are putting on the armour of light and that is a state of salvation. Since, according to Johannine theology, light is the symbol of salvation.<sup>39</sup>

The salvific state of the sealed ones in terms of light is glorious and splendid. The wearing of white clothes<sup>40</sup> by the newly baptised is the symbolic

35 Act X, 131. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 135.

36 Act V, 49. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 90.

37 Act II, 25. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 77.

38 See for details, R. H. Connolly (ed), *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, Vol. VIII (Cambridge: 1916) 33-62.

39 R. H. Connolly (ed), *Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, 43-44.

40 A. Edanad, *Christian Existence and the New Covenant* (Bangalore: 1987) 210. Similar ideas we see in *Odes of Solomon* (Ode 21:2, 25:8) and in *Exposition of Baptism* made by Moses bar Kepha (section 19).

41 Moses bar Kepha gives five meanings to this symbolic act. See, K. A. Aytoun, “The Mystery of Baptism...”.14.

expression of this graced state. That is why, the Syriac Fathers interpret baptism and the consequent glorified state as the clothing<sup>42</sup> of the "robe of glory", which Ephrem sometimes calls "robe of light".<sup>43</sup> For Aphrahat, the garment of glory is nothing else but Christ himself.<sup>44</sup> If so, clothing of the robe of glory or the "robe of light" is nothing but the 'clothing of Christ' himself. The clothing of the garment of glory/light which is Christ himself reminds us of the exhortation of St. Paul to the believers. In his letter to Ephesians he writes: "Be renewed in the spirit of your minds and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness".<sup>45</sup> "Now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light for the fruit of light in all that is good and right and true".<sup>46</sup> This is also well expressed in the Liturgical Prayers of this Church. "Confess O Church... the Son of the King who has clothed you with the garment of glorious and immortal light".<sup>47</sup> "...He has pleased with me and clothed me and I have put on him".<sup>48</sup>

As it is evident from the scripture, those who do not have the robe of

glory, metaphorically presented as the "marriage garment" cannot enter into the marriage banquet of the Lamb. Hence the reception of the seal is a prerequisite to join the "sheepfold" of the Lamb, who is the heavenly bridegroom. Otherwise we will be rejected by the King just like the guest who had no wedding garment in the parable of wedding banquet (Mt 22:1-14).

#### 4. Effects of Sealing

##### a. To become the "Handmaid of God" in the Church

The request of the wife of an official Karish, called Mygdonia, for obtaining the grace of God for receiving the "Sign of our Lord" directs our attention to some other aspects of baptism. The prayer of the woman is as follows:

I beg of thee, thou Apostle of the new God,... that I also *may obtain grace from this God* whom thou preacheest, and that I **may become a handmaiden of Him**, and I too **may be united with you in prayer and in hope and in thanksgiving** and that I too

42 For a detailed understanding of this theme in the light of Ephrem's writings, see, S. P. Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition" in *Syriac Christianity*, Art. XI, (Variorum: 1992) 11-33.

43 S. P. Brock, *Luminous Eye. The Spiritual World Vision of St. Ephrem*. (Bangalore: 1988), p.65.

44 *Dem* XIV. 39.

45 Eph. 4:23-24.

46 Eph. 5:8-9.

47 P. Bedjan (ed). *Breviarium iuxta Ritum Syrorum Orientalium id est Chaldaeorum* Vol. III, (Rome: 1938) 430.

48 P. Bedjan, *Breviarium*, Vol. III, 411.



may receive the sign and that I too may become a holy temple and he may dwell in me.<sup>49</sup>

This is a very beautiful prayer which depicts the true picture of a sealed one – Christian – what he/ she ought to be after the reception of the seal. A Christian should always be a handmaid of God just as Mary was (Lk 1:38) and should be in union with God in prayer; he should hope everything from the Lord and give thanks to Him for everything. But this should be in union with “you”-the ‘you’ here means the apostle. The apostle can be interpreted as the representative of the Church and its faith because the Church is founded on the apostles and their faith.<sup>50</sup> Consequently, union with the apostle means union with the Church. A baptised person should be in communion with the Church in all matters. In the rites of Christian initiation, the prayer of the imposition of hand before the first *rushma* says:

....in Thy manifold graces, may accept these people into Thy Holy Church and tabernacle.... Keep Thee them in Thy compassion from the adversities of satan and join them with Thy people and let them be counted as the sheep of Thy flock.<sup>51</sup>

The rites of initiation mark the entrance of the neophyte into the Church, the Body of Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who incorporates the baptised into the body of Christ and unites them with the other members as on one body of Christ (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:12-13). All these ideas remind us of the biblical passages Acts 2:42-47 and 1Thes 5:12-18 that speak of the nature of the early Christian community united in prayer and apostolic teaching. The unity among the Christians in all the aspects of their life was the hallmark of the early Church.

#### b. To become the “Pure Temple of God”

Another important grace that the baptised request from the Lord is to become a “pure temple of God”. This is typically a biblical idea.<sup>52</sup> St. Paul in his Letter to Corinthians asks: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If any one distorts God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and that temple you are”.<sup>53</sup> “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God”?<sup>54</sup> “We are the temple of living God”.<sup>55</sup> Since we are sealed by the Spirit, we are the temple

49 Act IX, 87, Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 110.

50 Eph 2:20.

51 The Liturgy of the Holy Apostles Addai and Mari together with the Liturgies of Mar Theodorus and Mar Nestorius and the Order of Baptism (Trichur: 1967) 121.

52 Similar idea we see in Ephrem, *Hymn on Epiphany*, 3:9. By chrism, the bodies of the baptizands. “are sealed as holy and become temples for God.”

53 1 Cor 3:16-18.

54 1 Cor 6:19.

55 2 Cor 6:16.

of the Holy Spirit. If we are God's temple, *ipso facto* we should be holy because God is holy. We can recall the words of St. Peter here: "...as He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am Holy'.<sup>56</sup> Parallel thoughts are seen in 1 Thes 4:7-8. It is in this context that we understand the exhortation of Judas Thomas to the sealed ones to keep their body and soul in purity.<sup>57</sup> This kind of exhortation we see in the Pauline Epistles also, especially in the context where he speaks that we are the temple of God (1 Cor 6:15ff; 2 Cor 6:14-16; 7:1). The blessedness of the pure is described in Act IX, 94 very vividly.

These are our souls, which are Thine, praise Thou our Lord. These are our Spirits, which are Thine, praise Thee my Lord. These our bodies, which Thou hast made worthy to be the dwelling-place of Thy Spirit, that is always to be glorified, praise Thee, my Lord...Blessed are the pure, whose souls never upbraid them,... Blessed are the spirits of the pure, who have on the crown and gone up from the contest to what is given up unto them. Blessed are the bodies of the pure, which are worthy to become clean temples in which the Messiah shall dwell. Blessed are

you pure, for ye are called judges. Blessed are ye, pure, for to you is granted power to forgive sins. Blessed are ye, pure, for ye have not destroyed what was delivered unto you, but ye take it up on high with you, rejoicing.<sup>58</sup>

This context better expresses the meaning of his exhortation to give up the worldly pleasures. The apostle gives a sound reason for that: "**everything will pass away Jesus alone abideth, and those who hope in Him and take refuge with Him, and deliver up themselves unto Him**".<sup>59</sup> In the light of Jesus' parable on the rich fool (Lk 12:16-21) we grasp better the meaning of this saying of Judas. Hence he gives her a very emphatic assurance: "**Jesus will not abandon her for His mercy is so great**".<sup>60</sup> The very same and strong assurance we see again in Act X, 119<sup>61</sup> where Judas Thomas says to her:

Be not afraid, Mygdonia, Jesus the Messiah will not forsake thee, and thy Lord will not forsake thee, to whom thou hast committed thy soul, the Gracious will not forsake thee, whose mercy is great....Look upon the light of thy Lord, for He will not let those that love Him walk in darkness. Behold the Companion of His servants, to whom He

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56 1 Pet 1:16.

57 Act VI, 52; IX, 84-85, 117 etc.

58 Act IX, 94. Klijn, 113.

59 Act IX, 88, PP. 110-11.

60 Act IX, 88, Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas*, 110-111.

61 Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas*, 129.



is a light in darkness. Behold the help of His servants, to whom He is a helper in afflictions.

### c. To become Bearer of Good Fruits

Again, only to those who are relieved from the worldly pleasures can receive the seed of the Word of God and yield fruits. This is very explicitly presented in *Act IX*, 94 where she (Mygdonia) says that "of truth, my Lord, through thy prayer I have received the living seed of the Word, and fruits which are like unto the seed I shall yield in my Lord Jesus".<sup>62</sup> The prayer that she recalls is as follows: "... the Word of the Messiah may dwell in you all and abide in you, because ye are given power over your own souls".<sup>63</sup> Here we see the fulfillment of Judas' this prayer for Mygdonia. If we remember the parable of the sower and seed in Mt 13:1-9 & 18-23; Mk 4:1-9 & 13-20 and Lk 8:4-8 & 11-15, we can understand the message of AT better. In the interpretation given to the parable, Jesus explicitly says that, the seeds that fell among the thorns did not bear fruit since they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life. Only those seeds fell on the good soil bear fruit.

### 5. Baptism: Bring Forth the New Man

Again in Act X, 131-132,<sup>64</sup> we see again a baptismal context. Here Judas gives an explanation to the meaning of baptism and the power and the glory of it. we read it as follows:

This is the baptism of the remission of sins; this is the bringer forth of new man; this is the restorer of understandings, and the mingler of soul and body, and the establisher of the new man in the Trinity, and which becometh a participation in the remission of sins. Glory to thee, hidden power of baptism! Glory to thee, hidden power, that dost communicate with us in baptism! Glory to thee, power that art visible in baptism! Glory to you, new creatures, who are renewed through baptism, who draw nigh to it in love!... Glory to thee, beloved fruit! Glory to thee, name of the Messiah! Glory to thee hidden power that dwellest in the Messiah!<sup>65</sup>

The power of baptism is presented here mainly in two ways: it remits sins and it carries the pardoned sinner into the life of Trinity and thereby a new man. The baptism is therefore 'a passage from "death to life"'. In other words, the baptism is the explicit expression

62 Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 113.

63 Act IX, 87, Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas*, 110.

64 Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 135.

65 Act X, 132. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 135.

of the "conversion to salvation".<sup>66</sup> To say it in other words using the Pauline terminology, baptism is a passage from the sinful old man to the redeemed new man; it is the "putting off" of the old man and the "putting on" of the new man. This new man is Christ himself. There are so many allusions in the Epistles to substantiate this idea. For example, in Col 3:9-10 we read: "...you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new creature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator"<sup>67</sup>. Consequently, now onwards, 'no more "I" but Christ will live in me'; that means I will become the dwelling place of God. The *AT* speaks of the effect of the Eucharist more or less in same line. Just as the baptism is meant for the remission of sins and a new life in the holy Trinity, the eucharist too is meant for these salvific effects. The Eucharist prayer that we find in this book will elucidate this fact:

Let it (Eucharist) be unto thee for the remission of transgressions and sins and for the everlasting resurrection". "Let this Eucharist be unto you for life and rest, and not for judgement and vengeance."<sup>68</sup>

Let this Eucharist be to you for life and rest and joy and health and for the healing of your souls and of your bodies.<sup>69</sup>

Living bread, the eaters of which die not! Bread, that fillest hungry souls with thy blessing! Thou art worthy to receive the gift and to be for the remission of sins, that those who eat thee may not die! We name the name of the Father over thee; we name the name of the Son over thee; we name the name of the Spirit over thee, the exalted name that is hidden from all....In Thy name, Jesus, may the power of the blessing and the thanksgiving come and abide upon this bread, that all the souls which take of it, may be renewed, and their sins may be forgiven them.<sup>70</sup>

These formulas show various effects of the eucharist. Nevertheless, the most frequently occurring effect is the remission of sins and the life to the soul and body and that can be interpreted as resurrection. The Eucharist is a pledge of immortality.<sup>71</sup>

## Part II Theological Principles

### 1. Pneumatologically Constituted Christology

When we go through the baptismal texts in the *AT* we can notice the order of baptism as anointing followed by the baptism by water and the reception of the Eucharist by the newly baptized.

66 Cfr. E.V. Gallagher, "Conversion and Salvation in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles", *Second Century* 8 (1991) 13-29.

67 Cfr. also Eph 4:22-24; Rom 6:1-14; Gal 6:14.

68 Act X, 50. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 91.

69 Act XIII, 158, Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 149.

70 Act X, 133. Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 136.

71 For details, see, A. Mikloshazy, *East-Syrian Eucharistic Pneumatology*, 51-58.



The order—anointing with the oil, baptism by water, communion in the Eucharist—is very important since it is the reflection of the theological outlook of the Church. One of the specialities of the Syriac Churches is that they have priority to the anointing than washing, ie baptising. It is the Syriac version of 47 that gives such an account of baptism. That reflects the tradition of the Syriac Churches.<sup>72</sup> But, in the Greek version, we see the opposite, ie, washing and anointing. The difference goes back to the different order of baptism in the Church in Syria and the Western Church.<sup>73</sup> This difference indicates the difference in the theological visions of the Churches. The Eastern Churches give priority to the action of the Spirit, ie, confirmation; consequently, a priority to Pneumatology. Whereas the Western Church gives priority to baptism; and that is due to their position of priority to Christology. Nevertheless, during the first centuries these actions remain inseparable.<sup>74</sup> Concerning this we can hear from a contemporary Orthodox theologian who speaks as follows:

It is well known that in Syria and Palestine, confirmation preceded baptism liturgically at least until the

4th century, while in other parts, the practice of the Church which finally prevailed everywhere was observed, namely, the performance of confirmation after baptism. Given the fact that confirmation was normally regarded as the rite of the “giving of the Spirit,” one could argue that in cases where confirmation preceded baptism we had a priority of Pneumatology over Christology, while in the other case we had the reverse. And yet there is also evidence suggesting that baptism itself was inconceivable in the early Church without the giving of the Spirit, which leads to the conclusion that the two rites were united in one synthesis both liturgically and theologically, regardless of the priority of any of the two aspects over the other.<sup>75</sup>

What we can deduce from this explanation is that the question of priority of Christology over pneumatology or pneumatology over Christology is only a *theologumenon*—theological opinion.<sup>76</sup> It is only a question of emphasis. Since, as the Church Father Irenaeus says, Christ and Spirit are the two hands of Father.<sup>77</sup> So, we cannot separate the activities of

72 The same order we see in the Didascalia, in Aphrahat, Ephrem, Narsai, etc. See, E. J. Duncan, “The Administration of Baptism in the Demonstrations of Aphraates”; L.L. Mitchell, “Four Fathers on Baptism” in J. Vellian (ed), *Studies on Baptismal Rites*, 16-36; 37-56 respectively.

73 Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 206; P. Meyendorff, “Eastern Liturgical Theology”, 351.

74 P. Meyendorff, “Eastern Liturgical Theology”, 351.

75 J. D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 128. For details, Cfr. T. W. Manson, “Entry into Membership of the Church” *Journal of Theological Studies* 48 (1947) 25-33; G. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* (London: 1951).

76 Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 127.

77 Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 5, 13.

them. However, the divine act of anyone of the Trinity is the wholistic act of the triune God. There are evidences in the Scriptures for a Christology prior to Pneumatology and the vice versa, and for the synthesis of both. According to scholars, the third option, ie, synthesis of both is the authentic approach, if we accept the trinitarian mystery as the ultimate reality and the absolute hermeneutic.<sup>78</sup> Every christology should be pneumatological and every pneumatology should be christological. Otherwise it will be either christomonism or pneumatomonism; both are distortions. A synthesis of both christology and pneumatology is the balanced position. Only such a pneumatologically constituted christology can serve as the hermeneutical principle in theology. As it is evident from the Bible, the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. With the expression "Spirit of Christ", Paul intends to say that through the event of Christ, the Spirit of God has acquired a new Christological determination and is forever united to the mystery of Christ. At the same time, "Spirit of Christ" also signifies the way in which the risen Christ is present to, and working in, the believers.<sup>79</sup> As the liturgical practice and the prayers that accompanied in the AT show, the Syriac Churches had such a pneumatologically constituted christology as their basic theological

principle. This can be further elucidated by the third element in the order of baptism, ie., the reception of Eucharist.

In the order of baptism we have seen that the anointing comes first and that is followed by the baptism by water. In the first act, if the point of consideration is the Spirit, in the second act, it is Christ. Since baptism according to the Syriac Fathers is an identification with Christ's baptism at Jordan<sup>80</sup> and that is also a participation into the death of Christ (Rom 6:3). In the third act, ie, communion in the Eucharist we see the synthesis of both. The Eucharist is the body of Christ. But the eucharistic elements become the body of Christ through the divine act of the Spirit; and that is the meaning and importance of epiclesis in every eucharistic celebration. The eucharist is therefore the pneumatic body of Christ and this is the understanding of the Syriac Fathers on Eucharist. The Fathers, especially St. Ephrem calls both Eucharist and the Spirit as "fire".<sup>81</sup> The order of baptism in the Syriac Churches is therefore a practical application and a reflection of their theological perception, pneumatological Christology, and this is nothing but an authentic trinitarian theology. It is this sound trinitarian theology that is the basis of their theological thinking.

78 K. McDonnell. "A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit" *Theological Studies* 46 (1985) 206.

79 J.H. P. Wong, "The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus and of the Christ" *Gregorianum* 73 (1992) 58.

80 Ephrem, *Hymn on Virginity*, 15:3.

81 Ephrem, *Hymn on Faith* X, 8-10. For details, see, S.P. Brock, "Fire from Heaven: from Abel's Sacrifice to the Eucharist. A Theme in Syriac Christianity" in *Studia Patristica* Vol. XXV (1993) 229-243.



## 2. NAME: A Trinitarian Concept

Another important theological idea we come across in the AT is related to the concept NAME.<sup>82</sup> In all the baptismal contexts, the baptism was conferred in the NAME of the Father, Son and the Spirit of Holiness.<sup>83</sup> Again in another context we see the use of the term Name together with the names of each person of the Trinity.<sup>84</sup> There are also some other occasions where the name is used exclusively for the second person of the Trinity. See for example:

Jesus, who hast deemed us worthy to draw nigh unto Thy holy Body and to partake of Thy life-giving Blood; and because of our reliance upon Thee we are bold and draw nigh, and invoke Thy holy Name, which has been proclaimed by the prophets as Thy Godhead willed; and Thou art preached by Thy apostles through the whole world according to thy grace, and art revealed by Thy mercy to the just: we beg of Thee that Thou wouldest come and communicate with us for help and for life, and for the conversion of Thy servants unto Thee, that they may go under Thy pleasant yoke and under Thy victorious power, and

that it may be unto them for the health of their souls and for the **life of their bodies** in Thy living world.<sup>85</sup>

Again we see another invocation of the **Name**. Here the invocation is upon the water. The prayer is as follows:

And he glorified God and blessed it and said: "Water that was given unto us by the Living water; Light that was sent to us by the glorious Self-existent; Grace that was sent to us by Grace; let Thy **victorious power** come, and Thy healing and Thy mercy descend and abide upon this water, over which I have proclaimed Thy **name**, Jesus our **Life-giver**".<sup>86</sup>

Here arises a question: Who is actually meant by the designation NAME-?<sup>87</sup> From the above said prayers it is evident that the Name invoked here is the Name of Jesus, the promised Messiah. But in the baptismal formulas, the Name designates the Trinity and in the other reference, ie, Act X, 133, it designates all the three persons. In order to answer this problem, we turn our attention to the Scripture. We know from the OT that the NAME is meant for Yahweh,<sup>88</sup> and in the NT, it

82 The emphasis given to the Name to designate the Divine may be the result of Jewish influence on the Syriac Christianity.

83 Act II, 27; V:49 etc.

84 Act X, 133, Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 136.

85 Act X, 49, Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 90-91.

86 Act VI, 52, Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, 92.

87 See for details, A. Mikloshazy, *East-Syrian Eucharistic Pneumatology*, 39-40.

88 Ex 3: 14-15; Ex 20:7.

is meant for the Trinity,<sup>89</sup> and also the Father<sup>90</sup> who takes the place of Yahweh in the OT. Hence our simple conclusion is that the appellation Name has a trinitarian connotation.

But there are also evidences in the NT that the term Name is used also for Christ.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, there are evidences in the NT that the Name of Christ has taken the place of the Name of Yahweh.<sup>92</sup> The first Christians were baptized in the Name of Christ, the Lord.<sup>93</sup> The Christ here, is the Glorified Christ. What we wanted to point out here is that even if the NAME denotes Messiah, that itself is not against the above said trinitarian understanding. Because, according to St. Irenaeus, the very name of "Christ" or "Messiah" reveals the Trinity. He says: "in the name of Christ is implied the anointer, the anointed and the unction. The Father is the anointer, the Son is the anointed

and the Holy Spirit is the unction".<sup>94</sup> Moses bar Kepha also gives a similar explanation.

For the name of Messiah symbolizes the whole of the Trinity. And how so? It is the Father who anoints and the Son who is anointed, and it is the Holy Spirit which is the anointing. For in every anointed one there are three things concurring: the anointer, the anointed and the anointing. The anointer is the Father, the anointed is the Son and the anointing is the Holy Spirit. And because the name of the Messiah signifies the whole Trinity, the priest says "sign the Messiah" on those who are being baptized.<sup>95</sup>

St. Augustine says: "Many things are said about the Son, because the Son assumed human nature, but the whole Trinity contributed to the Incarnation of the Son, for the works of the Trinity are inseparable".<sup>96</sup>

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89 Mt 28:19.

90 Mt 6:9; Lk 11:2.

91 Phil 2:9-11, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the NAME and is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

92 Acts 5; 28; 3Jn 7.

93 Acts 8:16; 10:48., Didache 9, 5.

94 Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 3, 15, 3.

95 Moses bar Kepha, *Exposition of the Holy Mysteries of Baptism*, 11. Cfr. K.A. Aytoun, *The Mystery of Baptism---*, 11.

96 Quoted from, H.de Lubac, *Christian Faith. The Structure of the Apostolic Creed* (London:1986) 60-61.



## Conclusion

The Apocryphal *AT* is a theologically rich piece of literature which contains certain fundamental Christian doctrines. Although its presentation is fictitious, the truths, insights that it convey are orthodox and theological. It contains the *esse* of the Christian revelation and faith. It was written during the time when the dogmas of the Church were in a process of taking shape. *AT* is the product of the newly confessed

faith community. Its categories are not dogmatic; but they are doctrinal and theological. It contains a substantial baptismal theology which can serve as the foundation of Syriac baptismal tradition. *AT* presents actually the biblical foundation of a very ancient baptismal tradition. Standing on this biblical foundation it presents a deep theology which has really far-reaching ecumenical implications.

Sophy Rose C M C

# The Anglican - Roman Catholic Dialogue

Any attempt to discuss the Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church (Church of England) will not be complete without narrating the history of the division and estrangement between these two churches from sixteenth century onwards. There are theological, historical and political reasons for the division and breaking away. One of the immediate reasons for the division was the 'Act of supremacy' of Henry VIII in 1538 which confirmed the King and his successors as the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England called 'Anglicana Ecclesia'. In 1599 a revised version of this Act was passed by Elizabeth I declaring the Queen to be "the only supreme governor of this realm". This legislation deprived the Pope any jurisdiction in the Church of England. The publication of an English 'Ordinal for the consecration of bishops, priests and deacons' in 1552, also contributed to the independence of the Church of England from Rome. In 1570 the Pope Pius V ex-communicated Queen Elizabeth and absolved her subjects of allegiance to her by the promulgation of the Bull (*Regnans in Excelsis*).

The relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church

were not at all smooth and friendly until the early period of this century. There were complete estrangement due to series of events and their reactions between these two churches. One important event to make links between these churches was the promulgation of the Apostolic letter 'Apostolicae curae' by Pope Leo XIII in 1896. This letter focused on the estrangement and specified the issues that had to be faced between the Roman Catholic church (RCC) and the Church of England (CE). The Anglican Church excluded all sacrificial nature of the Eucharist and the 1552 ordinal was in conflict with the concept of ministry according to RCC. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York of the CE, responded to this in 1897 by saying that the intention of CE in its ordination was precisely to confer the ministry that was instituted by Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Since the 'Apostolicae curae', there was a slow but steady development in contacts and exchange between the two communions. Between 1921-25, a series of meetings were held under the Chairmanship of Archbishop Mercier among these churches in Malines, Belgium. This was initiated by the Anglican layman Lord Halifax. They communicated their views both to Pope Pius XI

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1 For a detailed study on the Catholic Anglican relations see, B. Pawley & M. Pawley, *Rome and Canterbury Through Four Centuries; A Study of the relations between the Church of Rome and the Anglican Church 1539-1981*, London, Mowbray, 1981.



and Archbishop Davidson of Canterbury. In 1932 the Archbishop of Canterbury set a council for foreign relations and officials and from this office began to visit Rome. From 1950 onwards, distinguished scholars and theologians from both churches began to meet in England and Europe. Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury is the first ever bishop visited the Pope in Rome. It was in 1960, he visited Pope John XIII.

Along with the second Vatican Council (1962-65) there occurred major changes in the relationship of these two churches. Anglican observers took part throughout the council sessions. Vatican II developed the theological principles which gave the RCC a basis for its ecumenical relation with other Christians. One of the first ecumenical initiatives after the council was with the Anglican Church. In 1966 Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury visited Pope Paul VI and they together set up the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC). The aim of the Commission was to start dialogue for the unity of ancient common tradition founded on the gospel for which Christ prayed.

The first commission (ARCIC-I) met between 1970 and 1982. There were three agreed statements: Eucharist, Ministry and Ordination, Authority of the Church. They held at Windsor (1971) Canterbury (1973) and Venice (1976) respectively. We shall discuss these statements in detail in the latter part of this paper.

The first commission addressed to those matters which were historically divisive to the RCC and CE ie, the eucharist and the ministry together with the question of authority within the Church. The purpose of this dialogue was 'to reach agreement in faith which will establish unity in truth. In 1982 the findings of the dialogue were published in the final report as ARCIC-I. This report consists of statements on Eucharistic doctrine, ministry and ordination and authority with explanations. The commission reached substantial agreement on eucharist, ministry and ordination on matters where it considers that the doctrine admits no divergence. They also claimed to have reached certain degree on 'authority'.

The final report were presented to the authorities of both Churches for their evaluation. The Anglican Communion gave its response to the findings of ARCIC-I during the Lambeth Conference held in 1988.<sup>2</sup> They considered that the agreed statements are in convergence with the faith of the Anglicans and these agreements have sufficient basis for taking the next step forward towards the reconciliation of the two churches grounded in agreement in faith. The statement on 'authority' were recognised as the basis for the direction and agenda of the continuing dialogue on 'authority'. The Vatican congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, in 1982 published its reaction to the final report in the form of 'a set of observations'. The official Catholic response is still awaited.

2 Lambeth Conference is the Decennial Conference of the bishops of the Anglican Communion all over the world convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Pope John Paul II visited Canterbury in 1982 on the invitation of Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury. They prayed together in Canterbury Cathedral and they set a Second Commission (ARCIC-II) through a joint declaration. The purpose, they said was "to examine especially in the light of our respective judgements on the final report, the outstanding doctrinal differences which still separate us, and to study all that hinder the mutual recognition of the ministries of our communions".<sup>3</sup>

Even before the official final response to ARCIC-I, the ARCIC-II was convened in 1983. Its first report 'Salvation and the Church'<sup>4</sup> an agreed statement on the doctrine of justification was published in 1987. We will be looking only at the ARCIC-I statements in detail. The responsibility of studying the possibilities of mutual recognition of ministries was dominated by 'the issue of the ordination of women to the priesthood'. By the time of the Lambeth Conference 1988, six provinces of the Anglican communion had already begun to ordain women to the priesthood. The Anglican (Episcopal) Church of USA ordained the first woman bishop in February 1989. This decision and practices have caused divisions and controversies

within the Anglican communion. It also affected the search for reconciliation of ministries between the RCC and the Anglican communion.

Archbishop Robert Runcie paid an official visit to Rome in 1989. He and Pope John Paul II made a common declaration which pointed out the problem caused to Anglican-Roman Catholic relations "The question and the practice of the admission of women to the ministerial priesthood in some provinces of the Anglican communion prevent reconciliation between us, even where there is otherwise progress towards agreement in the faith on the meaning of the eucharist and the ordained ministry".<sup>5</sup> However the present Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey also visited Pope John Paul II on 24th May 1992 after one year of his enthronement. The CE also began to ordain women for priesthood in 1994.

So far we were discussing the chronological development of the RCC and CE dialogue and some of its real issues which hinder the unity and mutual recognition. Now we need to look into the early agreed statements between the two churches with special emphasis on the Eucharist, ministry and ordination in detail. We will also make a reference to the agreed statement on the 'Authority' of the church.

3 See: Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue, in *'Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, W. C. C., Geneva, 1991. p. 28.

4 For details see: *Salvation and the Church: An agreed statement by ARCIC-II with commentary and study guide*, Church House, London, 1989.

5 For more information about the issue of 'Women priesthood see: *Women Priest Obstacles to Unity?* Documents and correspondence; Roma and Canterbury 1976-85, Catholic Truth Society London (1986).



## The Windsor statement on Eucharistic

### Doctrine<sup>6</sup>

This statement was issued on 7th September 1971 at Windsor Castle<sup>7</sup> (St. George House) England at the ARCIC meeting. The International Commission agreed unanimously to a statement which its members drafted concerning eucharistic doctrine. Bishop John H. R. Moorman of Ripon, one of the historians of Church of England called the document "*The most significant statement of the Roman and Anglican communions since the reformation*". The entire statement is divided into 3 major sections, viz 'The mystery of the Eucharist', 'The Eucharist and the sacrifice of Christ, and the presence of Christ'. There are 12 points to the statements of which we will be focusing only some important areas.

An important stage in the progress towards organic unity is a substantial consensus on the purpose and meaning of Eucharist. Our intention has to seek deeper understanding of the reality of the Eucharist which is consonant with Biblical teachings and with the tradition of our common inheritance and to express in this document the consensus we have reached.

### The Mystery of the Eucharist

1. When his people are gathered at the Eucharist to commemorate his saving acts for our redemption, Christ makes effective among us the eternal benefits of his victory and elicits and

renews our response of faith, by thanksgiving and self surrender. Christ through the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist builds up the life of the Church, strengthens its fellowship and furthers its mission. The identity of the Church as the body of Christ is both expressed and effectively proclaimed by its being centred in the partaking of, his body and blood. In the whole action of the Eucharist and in and by his sacramental presence given through bread and wine, the crucified and risen Lord, according to his promise, offers himself to his people.

2. In the Eucharist, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Receiving a foretaste of the Kingdom to come, we look back with thanksgiving to what Christ has done for us, we greet him present among us, we look forward to his final appearing in the fullness of his Kingdom.

### The Eucharist and the Sacrifice of Christ

3. Christ's redeeming death and resurrection took place *once for all in history*. Christ's death on the cross, the culmination of his whole life of obedience, *was the one perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world. These can be no repetition of or addition to what was then accomplished once for all by Christ...* God has given the Eucharist to his church as a means through which the atoning work of Christ on the cross is proclaimed and made effective in the Church.

6 The full text of the statement is given in *Worship*, Vol. 46. I, (1972), pp. 2-5.

7 Windsor Castle is the week-end residence of the Queen located near London.

The notion of 'memorial' is making effective in the present of an event in the past, has opened the way to a clearer understanding of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the Eucharist... Christ instituted the Eucharist as a memorial (anamensis) of the totality of God's reconciliation in him.

### The Presence of Christ

6 Communion with Christ in the Eucharist pre-supposes his true presence, effectually signified by bread and wine, which in the mystery, becomes his body and blood. *The real presence of his body and blood can however only be understood within the context of the redemptive activity.....*

7. Christ is present and active in various ways in the entire Eucharistic celebration. It is the same Lord who through the proclaimed word invites his people to his table, and who gives himself sacramentally in the body and blood of his paschal sacrifice.

8 The sacramental body and blood of the saviour are present as an offering to the believer awaiting his welcome. When this offering is met by faith, a lifegiving encounter results. Through faith, Christ's presence which does not depend on the individual's faith in order to be the Lord's real gift of himself to his church, becomes no longer just a presence for the believer, but also a presence with him. Thus considering the mystery of the Eucharistic presence, we must recognise both the sacramental sign of Christ's

presence and the personal relationship between Christ and the faithful which arises from the presence.

As a conclusion to the 'agreed statement on Eucharist', the ARCIC expressed the following remarks.

12 "We believe that we have reached substantial agreement on the doctrine of the Eucharist. Although we are all conditioned by the traditional ways in which we have expressed and practised our Eucharistic faith, we are convinced that if there are any remaining points of disagreement, they can be resolved on the principles here established. We acknowledge a variety of theological approaches within both our communions. *But we have seen it our task to find a way of advancing together beyond the doctrinal disagreement of the past.* It is our hope that in view of the agreement which we have reached on Eucharistic faith, this doctrine will no longer constitute an obstacle to the unity we seek".<sup>8</sup>

Herbert J. Ryan, one of the members of ARCIC-I,<sup>9</sup> made an evaluation on the Windsor agreement. "The statement produced at Windsor on Eucharistic doctrine is significant because it marks the successful completion of the first step of the work laid down by ARCIC. This group of 18 bishops and theologians was appointed by the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1969 to oversee the relations and have taken as its aim the achievement of organic union between the Anglican and Roman communions.

<sup>8</sup> Worship, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> J. Charley, Agreement on the Eucharist, Grove Books, 1971.



The commission concluded that the unity in faith must precede organic union. Though Roman Catholics and Anglicans share the same faith in many matters, it was not clear to the members of the commission that Romans and Anglicans were at one in faith concerning the Eucharist. The commission has found a way to cut through the polemical formulations of the past and uncover the present living faith which both Anglicans and Roman Catholics truly share".<sup>10</sup>

### Canterbury Statement on Ministry and Ordination.<sup>11</sup>

A statement on the Doctrine of the Ministry agreed by the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission is issued for publication at Canterbury, England in 1973. The Document is the result of the work of the officially appointed commission and submitted to the authorities of the churches for their consideration.

The statement on 'Ministry and Ordination' is divided into five sections including a brief introduction (1-2) and conclusion (17). The major portion of the document is in the 3 larger sections. Ministry in the life of the church (3-6), the ordained ministry (7-13) and vocation and ordination. The introduction describes the limited purpose of the statement, which is not designed to be an exhaustive

treatment of ministry, but seeks "to express our basic agreement in the doctrinal areas that have been a source of controversy between us". The ordained ministry is placed within the context of the whole service of the church and care is taken to state that all ministries are the work of one and the same spirit. The dichotomy of Charismatic and institutional ministry is denied.<sup>12</sup>

The first of the larger sections deals with ministry in the life of the Church. Para 3 introduces the main theme of the entire statement which comes from 2 Cor 5, closing verse, the reconciliation accomplished in Christ and how the church and all christian ministry serves this purpose of the Triune God. Para 4 introduces the idea of apostolicity in sending of the Son by the Father. The 5th para completes a Trinitarian understanding of this reconciliation.

The second larger section treats of the ordained ministry. Para 7 describes a fully developed Trinitarian theology, the ministry of the whole Christian community. Ministry is understood as service in and under the Spirit of Jesus moving each person and reality to the Father. The ordained ministry is a focus of leadership whose task is to discern what is of the spirit, what promotes the unity of the christian fellowship, the accomplishment of the reconciliation

10 See. H. J. Ryan; Anglican Roman Catholic Doctrinal Agreement on the Eucharist in Worship, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

11 The Document is reproduced in: Worship, Vol. 48, I (1971), pp. 2-10.

12 A summary of the Document is given in: Richard L. Stewart, Anglicans and Roman Catholics, Catholic Truth Society, London 1977.

wrought by Christ, the fulfilment of the Trinity's plan of creation and recreation. The forms of ministry may vary in different cultures and areas but its task ever remains the same. Para 10&11 try to restore a balance of 'Word' and 'Sacrament' in the theological understanding of the functions of the ordained minister. Para 13 answers two issues ie, the use of the term 'Priest' does not imply that the ordained minister presiding at the Eucharist is offering a different and new sacrifice in addition to the paschal sacrifices of Christ. The Anglicans and Roman Catholic both believe that the ordained ministry is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood. The ordained ministry belongs to another realm of the gift of the Spirit.

In the third section, the emphasis is given to the communal or ecclesial nature of both vocation and ordination. Para 14 states: "Ordination denotes entry into this apostolic and God-given ministry which serves and signifies the unity of the local churches in themselves and with one another". The Trinitarian framework of reconciliation wrought in Christ and a eucharistically centred ecclesiology of *koinonia* provides the background for the treatment of vocation and ordination. The Canterbury statement does not intend to be judgemental of the apostolicity of any church's ministry. It states what RCC and Anglicans believe concerning the relationship which exist between episcopal ordination and apostolicity of the Church.<sup>13</sup>

In the conclusion, the Canterbury statement refrains from judging whether in fact ministerial apostolic succession is to be found in RCC or in the Churches of Anglican communion. Agreement on the nature of ministry is prior to the consideration of the mutual recognition of ministries. The Canterbury statement represents a new and a serious ecumenical approach to organic union between the RCC and the Anglican communion. It is the result of 3 years intensive study and research by the 20 member commission of both Churches.

### Venice Statement on Authority in the Church

The ARCIC presented a Joint Statement at Venice in 1976.<sup>14</sup> The document was released on January 1977, by the commission. In the preface the chairmen say the following observation about the documents: "The question of authority in the church has long been recognised as crucial to the growth in unity of the RCC and the churches of the Anglican communion. It was precisely in the problem of papal primacy that our historical divisions found their unhappy origin. Unresolved questions on the nature and exercise of authority in the church would hinder the growing experience of unity which is the pattern of our present relations. Though we have not been able to resolve some of the difficulties of Anglicans, concerning Roman Catholic belief relating to the office of the bishop of Rome, we hope and trust that our analysis has placed these problems in a

13 Evaluation of the Canterbury statement is taken from: H. J. Ryan, The Canterbury statement on Ministry and Ordination, *Worship*, Vol. 48, I, 1974, pp. 11-20.

14 The entire document of ARCIC on 'Authority in the Church' is cited in *Worship*, Vol. 51, II, (1977) pp. 90-102.



proper perspective. The consensus we have reached, if it is to be accepted by our two communities would have important consequence. Common recognition of Roman primacy would bring changes not only to Anglican communion, but also to the RCC. The prospect should be met with faith and not with fear. Communion with the see of Rome would bring to the Churches of Anglican communion not only a wider *koinonia* but also a strengthening of the power to realize its traditional ideal of diversity in unity. Roman Catholics on their side would be enriched by the presence of a particular tradition of spirituality and scholarship, the lack of which has deprived the RCC of a precious element in the Christian heritage. The RCC has much to learn from the Anglican synodical tradition of involving the laity in the life and mission of the church. We are convinced therefore that our degree of agreement which argues for greater communion between our churches can make a profound contribution to the witness of Christianity in our contemporary society".

The statement is divided into 6 sections with the introduction and conclusion. They are (1) Christian authority (2) Authority in the Church. (3) Authority in the communion of the churches. (4) Authority in matters of faith. (5) Conciliar and primatial authority. (6) Problems and prospects.

Some of the problems highlighted in the statements need to be further examined here. There is consensus on authority in the Church. But the question associated with the papal primacy is not

solved in the dialogue. Claims on behalf of the Roman see as commonly presented in the past have put a greater weight on the Petrine text (Mt. 16:18,19, Lk.22:31, 22, Jn. 21:15-17) than they are generally thought to be able to bear. However many Roman Catholic scholars do not feel it necessary to stand by former exegesis of these texts in every respect.

The first Vatican Council of 1870 uses the language of 'divine right' of the successors of Peter. This language has no clear interpretation in modern Roman Catholic theology. If it is understood as affirming that the universal primacy of the bishop of Rome as part of God's design for the universal *koinonia*, then it need not be a matter of disagreement. But if it were further implied that as long as a church is not in communion with the bishop of Rome, it is regarded by the Roman Catholic Church as less than fully a church, a difficulty will remain.

Anglicans find grave difficulty in the affirmation that the Pope can be infallible in his teaching.... For the RCC the Pope's dogmatic definitions, which fulfilling the criteria of infallibility are preserved from error, do express the mind of the church on issues concerning the divine revelation. Special difficulties are created by recent Marian dogmas, because Anglicans doubt the appropriateness of defining them as essential to the faith of the believers.

The claim that the Pope possesses universal immediate jurisdiction, the limits of which are not clearly specified, is a source of anxiety to Anglicans who fear that the way is thus open to its illegitimate or uncontrolled use. The

RCC is today seeking to replace the the juridical outlook of the 19th century by a more pastoral understanding of authority in the church.

In spite of the difficulties mentioned above the statement says that "we believe that this statement on authority in the Church<sup>15</sup> represents a significant convergence with far reaching consequences". Doctrinal agreements by themselves can not achieve the goal of christian unity. It needs at the level of faith which requires action to bring about a closer sharing between our two communions in life worship and Mission.

### Present Position

We have already mentioned that the present Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, visited Pope John Paul II on 24 May 1992. During his speech, the Archbishop remarked "Ecumenism does in three ways; salvation rooted in our common baptism, in our common search for truth, it is expressed in our common mission. We recognise one another as fellow christians and pilgrims. Baptism in the name of trinity is a family sign; it is the sacrament of our membership of the family of God. We have reached remarkable agreement concerning the nature of the Eucharist, we have acknowledged the priesthood of the ordained ministry without denying the priesthood of all believers. We have reached agreement concerning the most

controversial of reformation doctrines, justification by faith although much remains to be done, the gains are enormous".<sup>16</sup>

About Anglican-Roman Catholic relations the Archbishop further says in his talk at Maline's Cathedral in Belgium, 1993. Despite continued divergences and contrasts, we should not underestimate how far along the road we have travelled together. We must protect all that has been achieved. ARCIC is a vital link and theological dialogue is indispensable. There is a need for further theological study on the ecclesial and sacramental unity. A deepening unity may emerge as we learn from each other by the way of exchange'.<sup>17</sup>

### The Question of Ordination of Women

There is certain degree of estrangement between the Anglican Church and the Roman Catholic Church on the question of ordination of women to priesthood. Roman Catholics are confused and disoriented at the decision of the Anglican communion and the Church of England itself to ordain women. Again the present Archbishop's response to this was as follows: "I am aware of that the ordination of women to the priesthood presents a problem to the Orthodox, Roman Catholic Churches. It does so for many Anglicans as well. But I have to recognise that, in parts

15 For an analysis of the venice statement see: H. J. Ryan, Venice Statement, Worship, Vol. 51, II, pp. 103-106.

16 'Unity with Roman Catholics'. George Carey's address during his visit to Pope John Paul II in May 1992 quoted from George Carey: Sharing a Vision, DLT, London 1993, pp. 236-39.

17 George Carey, op. cit., p. 260-61.



of the Anglican communion, the ordination of women has not destroyed the church, but it could be argued that given it new life".<sup>18</sup>

In the debate on the ordination of women at the general synod of the church of England Archbishop expressed his views like this: "I am well aware that there are those who are profoundly troubled by the ecumenical implications of the decision to ordain women. I recognise this, but this consideration is not completely over-riding. I believe that constructive loving relationship with our sister churches can and will continue. Significant part of the christendom does not ordain women to the priesthood, but there are many traditions in which the experience of women in ministry is not a burden but a joy, not a handicap to mission but a strength. We must not look in one direction only".<sup>19</sup>

### Conclusion

It will be a distortion however to see ecumenical relations between Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches only

in terms of problems related with the issue of ordination of women. The RCC and the Anglicans entered into a new relationship that looks to the future and seeks to overcome estrangement of the past. "When christians reflect on how disagreed they have been about Eucharist in the past, the general reflection on the two statements (the ARCIC statement on Eucharist and the Lima document on Eucharist by the Faith and Order commission of WCC) together, started widespread accord. Some greater question of ecclesiology have to be solved before we can share in the one bread as we could wish. On the Eucharist, there is a genuine ecumenical convergence which is not a bare minimum but a rich and growing consensus".<sup>20</sup> The Spirit of hope and attitude of openness are reflected in many countries. National Commissions seek to develop closer relationship within the country. In local situations the Anglicans and Roman Catholics have come together in a new spirit of friendship, collaboration and prayer.

George Mathew

18 Ibid., p. 239.

19 Ibid., p. 226.

20 C. Buchanan, ARCIC and LIMA on Baptism and Eucharist. Grove Books (1983), p. 16.

# The Catholic Churches of Oriental Tradition 1997

## I. Alexandrian Tradition

### 1. Coptic Church

P	Alexandria	+ Stephanos II (Ghattas) * 1920	Cairo	Egypt	86500
Ep	Assiut	+ Kyrillos (William) * 1946	Assiut	Egypt	34000
Ep	Ismayliah	+ Makarios (Tewfik) * 1945	Ismailia	Egypt	5000
Ep	Luqсор	+ Youhannes (Zakaria)* 1949	Luqсор	Egypt	18000
Ep	Minya	+ Antonios (Naguib) * 1935	Minya	Egypt	37205
Ep	Sohag	+ Morkos (Hakim)* 1930	Sohag	Egypt	12250
					192955*

#### Other hierarchs

- + Youhanna (Golta)\* 1937, tit. B of Andropolis, patriarchal auxiliary
- + Andraos (Salama)\* 1931, tit. B of Barca, patriarchal auxiliary

### 2. Ethiopian (Ghe'ez) Church

M	Addis Ababa	+ Paulos (card. Tzadua)* 1921	Addis Ababa	Ethiopia	50000
p	Adigrat	+ Kidane-Mariam (Teklehaimanot)*1933	Adigrat	Ethiopia	16546
Ep	Asmara	+ Zekarias (Yohannes)* 1925	Asmara	Erythrea	40127
Ep	Barentu	+ Luca (Milesi)* 1924		Erythrea	35478
Ep	Keren	+ Tesfemarian (Bedho)* 1934		Erythrea	49959
					192110*

#### Other hierarchy

- + Francois Abraha\* 1918, B emeritus of Asmara

## II. Antiochene Tradition

### 1. Syrian Church

P	Antioch	+ Ignatios Antoon II (Hayek)*1910	Beirut	Lebanon	
PEX	Lebanon		Beirut	Lebanon	23000
PEX	Jerusalem	Corepiscopus Butros Abdel-Ahad	Jerusalem & Amman	Israel Jordan	700
PEX	Turkey	Corepiscopus Yusuf Sag	Istanbul	Turkey	2100
PEX	Iraq and Kuwait		Bassorah	Iraq	1200
AEP	Baghdad	+ Athanasios Matti Shaba (Matoka)* 1930	Baghdad	Iraq	23900
AEP	Mossul	+ Kurillos Emmanuel (Benni)* 1921	Mossul	Iraq	27800

M	Damascus	+ Eustathios Youssef (Mounayer)* 1925	Damascus	Syria	6000
M	Homs, Hama & Nabb	+ Basilios Mussa (Dawood)* 1930	Homs	Syria	10100
AEp	Aleppo	+ Rabula Antoon (Beylouni)* 1930	Azizieh (Aleppo)	Syria	8800
AEp	Hassakeh-Nisibis	+ Ja'qob George Habib (Hafouri)* 1916	Hassaké	Syria	5077
Ep	Cairo	+ Youssef (Hannouche)	Cairo	Egypt	2070
Ep	Our Lady of Delvverance of Newark	+ Joseph (Younan)* 1944			109547*

### Other hierarchs

- + Julios Mikhail (Al-Jamil)\* 1938, tit. AB of Takrit, patriarchal auxiliary
- + Flavien Youssef (Melki)\* 1931, tit. B. of Dara, patriarchal auxiliary, delegate to the seminary
- + Elias (Tabè)\* 1941, tit. B of Mardin, patriarchal auxiliary

### 2. Syro - Malankara Church

M	Trivandrum	+ Cyril Mar Baselios (Malancharuvil)* 1935	Trivandrum	India	245743
Ep	Tiruvalla	+ Geevarghese Timotheos (Chundevalel)* 1928	Tiruvalla	India	55245
Ep	Battery	+ Varghese Mar (Ottathengil)* 1950	Sultan's Battery	India	22000
Ep	Marthandom				322988*

### Other hierarchs

- + Paulos Philoxinos (Ayyamkulangara)\* 1928, tit. M of Chayal

### 3. Maronite Church

P	Antioch	+ Nasrallah Butros (Sfeir)* 1920, card.	Bkerké	Lebanon	
Ex	Jerusalem	Corepiscopus Augustin Harfouche	Jerusalem	Israel	380
AEp	Antelias	+ Yussef Mohsen (Béchara)* 1935	Antelias	Lebanon	102310
AEp	Beirut	+ Paul Youssef (Matar)* 1941	Beirut	Lebanon	3500000
AEp	Tripoli	+ Gabriel (Toubia)* 1930	Tripoli	Lebanon	80828
AEp	Tyrus	+ Maroon (Sader)* 1926	Tyrus	Lebanon	18000
Ep	Baalbek-Deir El-Ahmar	+ Mounded (El-Hachem)* 1934	Deir El-Ahmar	Lebanon	35000
Ep	Batrun and Sarba	+ The Patriarch			298000



Ep	Jbeil	+ Béchara (Rai)* 1940	Jbeil	Lebanon	300000
EP	Jounieh	+ Chucrallah (Harb)* 1923	Aramoun	Lebanon	191928
Ep	Saida	+ Tanios (Khoury)* 1930	Saida	Lebanon	65000
Ep	Zahleh	+ George (Scandar)* 1927	Zahleh	Lebanon	48850
AEp	Cyprus	+ Butros (Gemayel)* 1932	Nicosia	Cyprus	10000
Ep	Cairo	+ Yussef (Dergham)* 1930	Cairo	Egypt	5000
AEp	Aleppo	+ Butros (Callaos)* 1922	Aleppo	Syria	3700
AEp	Damascus	Antoon Hamid (Moorany)* 1930	Damascus	Syria	8000
Ep	Lattaqiya	Antoon (Torbey)* 1925	Tartous	Syria	27000
Ep	St. Charbel of Buenos Aires	+ Charbel (Merhi)* 1937	Buenos Aires	Argentina	700000
Ep	O. L. of Lebanon in Sao Paulo	+ Yussef (Mahfouz)* 1932	Sao Paulo	Brazil	446000
Ep	St. Maron of Brooklyn	+ Hector (Doueih)* 1927	Brooklyn, NY	USA	30000
Ep	O. L. of Lebanon of Los Angeles	+ John George (Chedid)* 1923	Los Angeles, CA	USA	21860
Ep	St. Maron of Sydney	+ Yussef (Hitty)* 1925	Strathfield, NSW	Australia	150000
Ep	St. Maron of Montreal	+ Georges (Abi-Nader)* 1923	Montreal	Canada	50000
Ep	Our Lady of the Martyrs of Lebanon in Mexico	+ Butros Wadih (Tayah)* 1937	Mexico, D. F.	Mexico	2941856*

# Other hierarchs

- + Khalil (Abinader)\* 1921, Memeritus of Beirut
- + Francis Mansour (Zayek)\* 1920, AB-B emeritus of St. Maron of Brooklyn
- + Ignatius Abdo (Khalifé)\* 1914, B emeritus of St. Maron of Sydney
- + Bulos Emilios (Saadé)\* 1933, tit. B. of Apamea, Patriarchal Vicar for Batrun and Zghorta region
- + Guy Bulos (Nujeim)\* 1935, tit. B of Caesarea Philippi, Patriarchal Vicar for Sarba
- + Francis Nehmeh (Baïssari)\* 1933, tit. B of Aradus, Patriarchal Vicar for Jubbeh
- + Roland (Abujawdeh)\* 1930, tit. B. of Arca in Phoenicia, Patriarchal auxiliary and Vicar General
- + Yussef (Khoury)\* 1936, tit. B of Qara, Ap. Visitor for Maronites living in Western and Northern Europe
- + Emilios (Eid)\* 1925, tit. B. of Sarepta, former Vice-President of the Pont. Commission for the revision of the Code of Oriental Canon Law, Patr. procurator in Rome

- + Edmond (Farhat)\*, tit. AB of Biblus, Ap. Pronuncio in Algeria and Tunisia, Ap. Delegate in Lybia
- + Bulos Fuad (Tabet)\*, tit. AB of Sinna, Ap. Nuncio, Permanent Observer at the United Nations institutions in Geneva
- + Elias (Farah)\* 1909, AB emeritus of Cyprus
- + Aghnatos Abdo (Khalifé)\* 1925, AB, B emeritus of Saint Maron of Sydney
- + Philippos (Chebaya)\* 1920, B emeritus of Baalbek-Deir El-Ahmar

### III. Armenian Tradition

#### Armenian Church

P	Cilicia	+ Hovhannes XVIII Bedros (Kasparian)* 1927			
PEX	Damascus	Mitred Archpriest George Tayroyan	Damascus	Syria	3200
PEX	Jerusalem	+ André (Bedoglouyan), tit. B of Comana			
M	Beirut	+ The Catholicos-Patriarch of Cilicia	Beirut	Lebanon	12000
Ep	Ispahan	+ Vartan (Tekeyan)* 1921	Teheran	Iran	2600
AEP	Baghdad	+ Paul (Coussa)* 1917	Baghdad	Iraq	2200
Ep	Alexandria	+ Butros (Taza)* 1940	Cairo	Egypt	1580
AEP	Aleppo	+ Butros (Marayati)* 1948	Aleppo	Syria	17000
Ep	Kamichlieh	+ Butros of Aleppo, Ap. Adm.	Kamichlieh	Syria	5000
AEP	Istanbul	+ Hovhannes (Tcholakian)* 1919	Istanbul	Turkey	3680
AEP	L'viv	+ (vacant)	L'viv	Ukraine	
Ep	Holy Cross of Paris	+ Krikor (Gabroyan)* 1934	Paris	France	300000
Ep	St. Gregory of Narek at Buenos Aires	+ Vartan Waldir (Boghossian)* 1940	Buenos Aires	Argentina	16000
ApEx	U. S. A. and -	+ Hovhannes (Tertsakian)*			
	Canada	1924 tit. B of Ancyra	New York	USA	26000
Ord	Greece	Mitred Archpriest Nishan Karakéhéyan,	Athens	Greece	600
	Apostolic Visitor for Armenians living in central-southern Europe				
Ord	Romania	+ György- Miklós (Jakubinyi)* 1946	Gherla	Romania	1000
	R. C. Archbp. of Alba Julia, Ap. Adm.				
Ord	Eastern Europe	+ Nerses (Der Nersessian)* 1920	Ghiumri	Armenia	200000
	t. B of Sebaste in Armenia				
ApEx	Latin America-	+ Vartan of			
	& Mexico	St. Gregory of Narek	Buenos Aires	Argentina	14000
					334860*

#### Other hierarchs

- + Hemayagh Bedros XVII (Ghedikian)\* 1905, Catholicos-Patriarch emeritus
- + Andrew (Bedoglouyan)\* 1920, tit. B of Comana, Patriarchal auxiliary and vicar general
- + Vartan (Achkarian)\* 1936, tit. B of Tokat

- + Raphael (Bayan)\* 1914, B emeritus of Alexandria
- + Mikail Nerses (Sétian)\* 1918, tit. B of Ancyra, former Ap. Exarch of the United States and Canada
- + Krikor (Ayvazian)\* 1912, tit. B of Marasc, former Eparch of Kamichlieh
- + Joseph (Amaouti)\* 1936, B emeritus of Kamichlieh, Auxiliary of St. Gregory of Narek at Buenos Aires, Argentina and of the Apostolic Exarchate of Latin America and Mexico

#### IV. Syro-Oriental Tradition

##### 1. >>Chaldean << Church of the East

P	Babylonia	+ Raphael I (Bidawid)* 1922			
PEx	Jerusalem	Corepiscopus Paul Collin			
M	Baghdad	+ The Catholic-Patriarch	Baghdad	Iraq	150500
M	Kerkuk	+ Andraos (Sana)* 1920	Kerkuk	Iraq	5197
AEp	Arbil	+	Arbil	Iraq	12500
AEp	Bassorah	+ Djibrail (Kassab)* 1938	Ashar-Basrah	Iraq	2600
AEp	Mossul	+ Giwargis (Garmo)* 1921	Mossul	Iraq	18920
M	Teheran	+ Yuhannan Semaan (Issayi)* 1914	Teheran	Iran	4250
M	Urmya	+ Thomas (Meram)* 1943	Urmya	Iran	1500
AEp	Ahwaz	+ Hanna (Zora)* 1937	Ahwaz	Iran	500
Ep	Alquoch	+ Abdul-Ahad (Sana)* 1922	Alquoch	Iraq	14900
Ep	Aqra	+ Abdul Ahad (Rabban)* 1916	Aqra	Iraq	192
Ep	Salmas	+ Thomas of Urmya	Urmya	Iraq	as above
Ep	Beirut	+ Yousif (Thomas)* 1934, Abp	Beirut	Lebanon	10000
Ep	Cairo	+ Youssef Ibrahim (Sarraf)* 1940	Cairo	Egypt	500
Ep	Aleppo	+ Antonios (Audo)* 1946	Aleppo	Syria	15000
AEp	Diyarbakir	+ Paulos (Karatas)* 1934	Istanbul	Turkey	2700
Ep	St. Thomas	+ Ibrahim Namu (Ibrahim)* 1934			
	the Apostle of Detroit		Southfield,MI	USA	60000
	Sulaimaniya	+ Abdul Ahad of Aqra, Patr. Administrator	Sulaimaniya	Iraq	500
					299759*

##### Other hierarchs

- + Emmanuel-Karim (Delly)\* 1927, tit. AB of Kashkar, Patriarchal auxiliary
- + Stephanos (Babaca)\* 1919, B emeritus of Arbil
- + Ramzi (Garmou)\* 1945, Coadjutor of Teheran

##### 2. Syro->> Malabar << Church

AM	Ernakulam-Angamaly	+Varkey (Vithayathil), tit. Archbishop of Acrida, Apostolic Administrator sede vacante			
M	Changanacherry	+Joseph(Powathil)* 1930	Changanacherry	India	360000



Ep	Kanjirappally	+ Mathew(Vattakuzhy)* 1930	Kanjirapally	India	155675
Ep	Kottayam (for the Knanaya)	+ Kuriakose(Kunnacherry)* 1927	Kottayam	India	120182
Ep	Palai	+ Joseph (Pallikaparambil)* 1927	Palai	India	334000
Ep	Thakkala	+ George(Alencherry)* 1945			
M	Tellicherry	+ George(Valiamattam)*1938	Tellicherry	India	273826
Ep	Mananthavady	+ Emmanuel(Pothanamuzhy)* 1932	Mananthavady	India	160987
Ep	Thamarasserry	+ Paul (Chittilapilly)* 1934	Thamarasserry	India	116864
M	Trichur	+ Jacob(Thoomkuzhy)* 1930	Trichur	India	420393
Ep	Irinjalakuda	+ James(Pazhayattil)* 1934	Irinjalakuda	India	248325
Ep	Palghat	+ Jacob(Manathodath)*1947	Palakkad	India	64421
M	Ernakulam- Angamaly	+ Varkey(Vithayathil), <i>Ap. Administrator</i>	Ernakulam	India	410075
Ep	Kothamangalam	+ George(Punnakottil)*1936	Kothamangalam	India	467550
Ep	Bijnor	+ Gratian(Mundadan)*1933	Kotdwar, U.P.	India	1305
Ep	Chanda	+ Vijay Anand (Nedumpuram) 1938	Ballapur, M.P.	India	23167
Ep	Gorakhpur	+ Dominic(Kokkat)* 1932	Gorakhpur, U.P.	India	1948
Ep	Jagdalpur	+ Simon Stock(Palathara)* 1935	Jagdalpur, M.P.	India	4537
Ep	Kalyan	+ Thomas(Elavanal)*	Kalyan, Bombay	India	100000
Ep	Rajkot	+ Gregory(Karotemprel)* 1933	Rajkot, Gujarat	India	8500
Ep	Sagar	+ Joseph Pastor (Neelankavil)*1930	Sagar, M.P.	India	4020
Ep	Satna	+ Abraham(Mattam)*1922	Satna, M.P.	India	2328
Ep	Ujjain	+ John(Perumattam)*1921	Ujjain, M.P.	India	2400
					3280503

#### Other hierarchs

+Antony (card. Padiyara), Major Archbishop emeritus and M - emeritus of Ernakulam-Angamaly

+ Sebastian(Valloppilly)\* 1911, B emeritus of Tellicherry

+ Joseph(Kundukulam)\* 1917, M. emeritus of Trichur

### V. Constantinopolitan or Byzantine Tradition

#### 1. Albanian Church

ApAdm Southern Albania + Hil(Kabashi)\*1941,  
tit B. of Turres in Byzanbcena Tirana Albania 1405\*

**2. Belorussian Church**

Belorussia [not yet restored] Rev. Jan Sergiusz Gajek MIC, Ap. Visitor

**3. Byzantine Church of Krizevci**

Ep Krizevci + Slavomir (Miklovs)\* 1234 Zagreb Croatia 48932\*

**Other hierarchs**

+Joakim(Herbut)\* 1928, B of Skopje-Prizren, Ap. Visitor for the faithful in Macedonia

+Joakim(Segedi)\* 1904. tit. B of Gissaria, retired auxiliary of Krizevci

**4. Bulgarian Church**

ApEx Sofia + Christo(Proykov)\* 1946, tit. B of Briula Sofia Bulgaria 20000\*

**Other hierarchs**

+Metodi (Dimitrov Stratiev)\* 1916, tit. AB of Diocletianopolis

**5. Greek (Hellenic) Church**ApEx Greece + Anarghyros(Printesis)\* 1937, tit. B of  
Gratianopolis Athen Greece 2300ApEx Constantinople Istanbul Turkey 50  
2350**6. Greek - Melkite Church**P Antioch +Maximos V(Hakim), Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, of  
Alexandria and of Jerusalem\*1908

PEX Alexandria+Bulos(Antaki)\* 1927, tit. AB of Nubia Cairo Egypt 7000

PEX Jerusalem +Lutfi(Laham\* 1933, tit. AB of Tarsus Jerusalem Israel 3100

PEX Iraq Archimandrite Nikolaos(Dagher) Baghdad Iraq 600

PEX Kuwait Archimandrite Basilios(Kanakry) Salamieh Kuwait 4500

M Aleppo + Jean-Clément (Jeanbart) Aleppo Syria 18000

M Bosra and Hauran + Bulos(Nassif Brokhoche)\* 1932 Khabab Syria 27000

M Damascus + The Patriarch Damascus Syria 95000

M Homs, Hama + Abraham(Nehmeh)\* 1927 Homs & Syria 25000  
and Yabrud

AEp Lattaqiya + Fares(Maakaroun) Lattaqiya Syria 10000

M Beirut and Jbeil + Habib(Bacha)\* 1931 Beirut Lebanon 150000

M Tyrus + Yuhanna(Assad Haddad)\* 1926 Tyrus Lebanon 8298

AEp Baalbek + Kyrillos(Salim Bustros)\* 1921 Baalbek Lebanon 25000

AEp Baniyas + Antoon(Hayek)\* 1928 Jqeidet Lebanon 3600  
Marjeyoun

AEp Saïda + Georges(Kwaïter)\*1928 Saïda Lebanon 20000

AEp Tripoli + Georges(Riashi) Tripoli Lebanon 6000

AEp Zahleh and Furzol + Andraos(Haddad)\* 1930 Zahleh Lebanon 126000

AEp Petra and + George(El-Murr)\* 1930 Amman Jordan 30000  
Philadelphia

AEp	Nazareth, Akka and Galilee	+ Maximos(Salloum)* 1923	Haifa	Israel	45000
Ep	O.L. of the Paradise in Sao Paulo	+ Butros (Mouallem)* 1928	Sao Paulo	Brasil	398000
Ep	Newton	+ John(Adel Elya)* 1928	Newton,MA	USA	27742
Ep	St.Saviour's of Montreal	+ Michel(Hakim)* 1921	Outrement,Qué.	Canada	43000
Ep	St.Michael's of Sydney	+ Issam(Darwish)* 1945	Darlington, NSW	Australia	45000
Ep	O. L. of the Paradise in Mexico	+(Vacat)	Mexico, D.F	Mexico	2500
ApEx	Venezuela	+ Georges(Kahhalé Zouhairaty), tit. B of Abila	Caracas	Venezuela	48000
ApVis	Argentina	+ George(Kahhalé Zouhairaty)			1168340*

### Other hierarchs

- +\* Francois (Abou-Mokh)\* 1923, tit. AB of Palmyra, Patriarchal Auxiliary
- +\* Isidore (Battikha)\* 1950, tit. AB of Pelusium, Patriarchal Vicar for Damascus
- +\* Yuhanna (Mansoor)\* 1928, tit. AB of Apamea, patriarchal auxiliary
- +\* Hilarion (Capucci)\* 1922, tit. AB of Caesarea in Palestine, [tit.] patriarchal exarch in Jerusalem, Apost. Visitor for the Greek Melkites in Western Europe
- +\* Elias (Zoghby)\* 1912, AB emeritus of Baalbek
- +\* Yussef (Elias Tawil)\* 1913, AB, B emeritus of Newton
- +\* Nicholas (James Samra)\* 1944, tit. B of Gerasa, auxiliary of Newton
- +\* Spiridon (Mattar)\* 1921, B emeritus of O. L. of the Paradise in Sao Paulo
- +\* Gregorios (Haddad)\* 1924, tit. AB of Adana, former M of Beirut
- +\* Joseph (Raya)\* 1917, tit. M of Scythopolis former AB of Nazareth, Akka and All Galilee
- + Aghnathios (Raad)\* 1923, AB emeritus of Saïda
- +\* Saba (Youakim)\* 1914, AB emeritus of Petra and Philadelphia
- +\* Mikhail (Yatim)\* 1930, AB emeritus of Lattadiya
- +\* Elias (Nijmeh)\* 1920, AB emeritus of Tripoli

### 7. Italo - Albanian Church

Ep	Lungro	+Eroale (Lupinacci)*1933	Lungro	Italy	33000
Ep	Piana degli Albanesi	+Sotir (Ferrara)*1937	Piana degli Albanesi	Italy	30000
Abbey	S.Maria di Grottaferrata	+Archimandrite Marco (Petta)	Grottaferrata	Italy	97 63097*

### 8. Romanian Church

M	Fagaras and Alba Julia	+Lucian (Muresan)*1931	Blaj	Romania	354000
Ep	Cluj-Gherla	+Archbishop Gheorge (Gutiu)*1924	Cluj-Napoca	Romania	505000



Ep	Lugoj	+Alexandru(Mesian)*1937	Lugoj	Romania	32000
Ep	Maramures	+Joan (Siscstean)* 1936	Baia Mare	Romania	477000
Ep	Oradea Mare	+Vasile (Hossu)* 1919	Oradea	Romania	50500
		+Virgil (Bercea)* 1958,	Coadjutor		
			of Oradea Mare		
Ep	St. George's in Canton	+John Michael (Botean)*1955	Canton, OH USA		5300
					1418500*

**Other hierarchs**

- +Alexandru (card. Todea)\* 1912, M emeritus of Fagaras and Alba Julia  
 +Florentin (Crihălmeanu)\* 1959, tit B of Silli in Numidia, Auxiliary to the eparch of Cluj Gherla  
 +Vasile (Louis Puscas)\* 1915, B emeritus of St. George's in Canton  
 +Vasile (Cristea)\* 1906, tit. B of Lebedo, former Ap. Visitor for Romanians in Europe (Rome)  
 +Ioan (Ploscaru)\* 1911, B emeritus of Lugoj

**9. Ruthenian Church**

Ep	Mukacevo	+Ivan (Semedi)* 1921	Uzhorod	Ukraine	320000
M	Pittsburgh	+Judson Michael (Procyk)	Pittsburgh, PA	USA	90150
Ep	Parma	+Basil Myron (Schott)	Parma, OH	USA	12788
Ep	Passaic	+Andrew (Pataki)* 1927	West Paterson, NJ	USA	69450
Ep	Van Nuys	George (Martin Kuzma)*1925	Northridge, CA	USA	3500
					495888

**Other hierarchs**

- + Ivan (Marghityc)\* 1921, tit. B of Scopelus, auxiliary of Mukacevo  
 + Josyf (Holovac)\* 1924, tit. B. of Sozopolis, auxiliary of Mukacevo  
 + Michael Joseph (Dudick)\* 1916, former B of Passaic

**10. Russian Church**

ApEx	Russia	[vacant]
ApEx	China	[vacant]

**11. Slovak Church**

Ep	Presov	+Jàn (Hirka)* 1923	Praha	Slovakia	208533
ApEx	Czeck Republic	+ Ivan (Ljavinec)* 1923,			
		tit. B of Acalissus	Praha	Czech Rep.	10000
Ep	Sts. Cyril and Methodius of Toronto	Rev. John Fetsco CSSR, Ap. Admin. <i>ad nutum S. Sedis</i>	Unionville, Ont.	Canada	20000
					239190

**Other hierarchs**

- + Milan (Chatur)\* 1957, tit. B of Cresima, auxiliary of Presov  
 + Michael (Rusnak)\* 1921, B emeritus of Sts. Cyril and Methodius of Toronto

## 12. Ukrainian Church

AM	L'viv	+Myroslav (Ivan Lubacivskyj, card.)* 1914			
	Administrator (Aux.)*	+Ljubomyr (Husar), B of Nisa* 1933			
M	L'viv, Halyc and Kamianetsk				
		The Major Archbishop	L'viv	Ukraine	1607008
Ep	Ivano-Frankivsk	+Sofron			
		(Dmyterko)* 1917	Ivano-Frankivsk	Ukraine	640000
Ep	Kolomyia-Cernivci	+ Pavlo(Vasylyk)* 1926	Kolomyia	Ukraine	583892
Ep	Sambir-Drohobyc	+ Julian			
		(Voronovskyj)* 1936	Drohobych	Ukraine	450000
Ep	Ternopil	+ Mykhajlo			
		(Sabryha)* 1940	Ternopil	Ukraine	594000
Ep	Zboriv	+	Zboriv	Ukraine	374279
AEx	Kyiv-Vyshorod	+Mykhajlo (Koltun),			
		B of Case di Pamfilia* 1949	Kyiv	Ukraine	300000
M	Przemyśl, Sanok	+Ivan			
	and Warsaw	(Martyniak)* 1939	Przemysl	Poland	67000
Ep	Wroclaw-Gdańsk	+Teodor			
	(Breslau-Danzig)	(Majkovyc)* 1932		Poland	53000
M	Philadelphia	+Stephen (Sulyk)*1924	Philadelphia,PA	USA	65000
Ep	St. Josaphat	+Robert(Mikhail			
	in Parma	Moskal)*1937	Parma, OH	USA	11540
Ep	St. Nicholas of	+Michael			
	Chicago	(Wiwchar)* 1932	Chicago, IL	USA	12000
Ep	Stamford	+Basil (Harry Losten)*1930	Stamford, CT	USA	33296
M	Winnipeg	+Michael (Bzdel)*1930	Winnipeg	Canada	45000
Ep	Edmonton	+Lauvrence(Huculak)*1951	Edmonton,Alb.	Canada	26250
Ep	New Westminster	+Severian (Yakymyshyn)	New West-		
			minster, B.C.	Canada	4000
Ep	Saskatoon	+Cornelius (Pasichny)*1927	Saskatoon, Sask.	Canada	15480
Ep	Toronto	+Isidore (Borecky)*1911	Toronto, Ont.	Canada	83700
Ep	Sts. Peter and Paul of Melbourne	+Peter			
		(Stasiuk)*1943	North Melbourne	Australia	38000
Ep	St. John the Baptist's at Curitiba	+Efraim			
		(Basilio Krevey)*1928	Curitiba	Brazil	140000
Ep	St. Mary's >>del Patrocinio<<at Buenos Aires				
		+Andrès (Sapelak)*1911	Buenos Aires	Argentina	125000
ApEx	Germany	+Michel (Hrynchyshyn)*1929,			
		tit.B of Zigris, Ap. Adm. sede vacante		Germany	23396
ApEx	Great Britain	+Michael (Kuchmiak)*1923,			
		tit. B of Agathopolis	London	Great	17000
ApEx	France	+Michel (Hrynchyshyn)*1929,		Britain	
		tit. B of Zigris	Paris	France	16000
					5323841

**Other hierarchs**

- +Volodymyr (Stemiuk)\* 1907, tit. AB of Marcianopolis  
 +Basil (Filevich)\*1918. B emeritus of Saskatoon  
 +Ivan (Praško)\*1914, B emeritus of Sts. Peter and Paul of Melbourne  
 +Myroslav (Stefan Marusyn)\*1924, AB, tit. B of Cadi, Secretary, Congregation for the  
 Oriental Churches  
 +Volodymyr (Walter Paska)\* 1923, tit. B of Tigillava, auxiliary to the Metropolitan  
 of Philadelphia  
 +Augustine (Eugene Hornyak)\* 1919, tit. B of Hermonthis, former Ap. Exarch in  
 Great Britain  
 +Platon (Kornyljak)\*1920, tit. B of Castra Martis Munich, former Ap. Exarch in Germany  
 +Roman (Danylak)\* 1930, tit. B of Nissa, Ap. Admin, »sede plena« of Toronto  
 +Vasylij (Ihor Medwit)\* 1949, tit. B of Hadriane, auxiliary to the Major Archbishop  
 +Julijan (Gbur)\* 1942, tit. B of Barcta, auxiliary to the Major Archbishop  
 +Ivan (Choma)\* 1923, tit. B of Patara, Pröcurator of the Major Archbishop in Rome  
 +Sofron (Mudryj),\* 1923, B-Coadjutor of Ivano-Frankivsk  
 +Stefan(Soroko),\*1951, tit B. of Acarassus, Auxiliary to Metropolitan Michael of Winnipeg

**13. Hungarian Church**

Ep	Hajdúdorog	+Szilárd (Keresztes)	Nyiregyháza	Hungary	253000
ApEx	Miskolc	+Szilárd of Hajdúdorog Ap. Adm. Műcsony		Hungary	27750
					280750*

**ORDINARIATS FOR FAITHFUL OF ORIENTAL TRADITIONS  
 HAVING NO ORDINARY OF THEIR OWN**

Argentina	+Antonio card, Quarracino	AB of Buenos Aires	110000
Austria	+Christoph Schönborn,	AB of Vienna [Byzantine rite faithful]	4500
Brazil	+Eugenio card, de Araújo Sales,	AB of Sao Paulo	10000
France	+Jean-Marie card, Lustiger,	AB of Paris	45000
Poland	+Józef card. Glemp,	AB of Warsaw [I Byzantine-Slav [Russian] rite parish and Armenian rite faithful]	?

In this survey, the following order was observed:

Rank of the ecclesiastical unit, its titular and his year of birth, his place and country of residence and the number of faithful.

**Abbreviations:**

AB=Archbishop; AEp=Archeparchy; AM=Archiepiscopate Major; AEx=Archepiscopa,  
 Exarchate; ApAdm=Apostolic Administration; ApEx=Apostolic Exarchate; B=Bishop;  
 Ep=Eparchy; M=Metropolitan, Metropoly; P=Patriarchate; PEx=patriarchal exarchate;  
 pont.=pontifical; tit.=titular.



## Book Review

Paul Pallath, *The Synod of Bishops of Catholic Oriental Churches*, Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam (The St. Thomas Christian Fellowship), 1994, xv+234 pp., Paperback L.it.25,000 (Available at Libreria Leoniana, Via dei Cosrridori 16/28, 00193 Roma, Italy).

The publication of the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* (CCEO) gave rise to many studies on the different aspects of Church legislation. This book, based on the author's doctoral dissertation at the Pontifical Institute of Oriental Studies in Rome, contains the first comprehensive study on the synodal structure of the Churches of oriental tradition in communion with the bishop of Rome, commonly called >>Catholic Oriental Churches<<. With satisfaction, we state that P. Pallath is not giving only a mere comment on the pertaining canons, but attempts, in the first part, to explain the theological foundation of synodical structure: having defined the nature and concept of synodality, he concentrates his attention at the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II, the collegiality of bishops and the principle of subsidiarity. Vatican II's communion ecclesiology is, as the author currently shows, much indebted to orthodox theology. This statement allows us to express here our appraisal of the, though not complete, bibliography, preceding the study itself. The author analyses in a second chapter the canonical legislation of the first eight centuries concerning the synodal structure, shows the different kinds of synods, the establishment of the principle of primacy as well as the relationship between synodality and primacy. These preliminary explanations are in fact helpful for the understanding of the contents of the present oriental canonical legislation promulgated by Pope John Paul II. Nevertheless one must always have in mind that this legislation (CCEO) is rather a papal code *for* than a code *of* the oriental churches in communion with the Roman Pope. Part two deals with the structure and organization of the synod of bishops, its major powers, and its rights and obligations. The different kinds of synods according to Pius XII's *Motu proprio Cleri sanctitati* form the point of departure. Thereupon the work of the revision is presented, before the author comes to an evaluation of the major powers, the rights and obligations of the synod of bishops in patriarchal and (major) archiepiscopal churches. The third part is of particular interest to those Churches *sui iuris* which do not have the rank of patriarchate or major archiepiscopate, especially the (Ethiopian, Syro-Malankara, Ruthenian) Metropolitan Churches. They do not have a synod of bishops, but only a *council of bishops* with restricted powers. The author shows the similarities and differences in the exercise of the major powers. The last chapter of his book confronts the synod of bishops of oriental churches *sui iuris* and the Bishop's Conferences of the Roman Catholic (>>Latin<<) Church (CIC cc. 447-459.). Here he also gives at first a historical survey regarding these conferences. While appreciating the progress made in the CCEO regarding synodal governance, the author does not overlook the problems and challenges the Catholic Oriental Churches will have to face also in future. We hope this work will find due attention, especially among the oriental churches in India which do not possess a proper oriental synodal experience.

John Madey

# News

## 1. Priestly Vocation in the Universal Church

Vatican has published a statistics on the vocation to priesthood in the last 25 years in the period 1970-95. The findings of the report is very useful to assess the trends of vocation to priesthood, those who leave the priesthood, the countries from where vocations are on the increase etc.

In 1970 the total number of priests were 448,508; and in 1995 it came down to 404,750. During the same period 182,135 candidates were ordained to the priesthood, 186,206 priests died and 45,823 left priesthood. Among those ordained the distribution according to the countries is: Europe - 81,515; USA 24,257, South America- 21,311. The smallest number is from Middle East-1097. In Europe 21,539 priests left priesthood; while in USA the number is 10,793. Here also Middle East has the smallest number - 203.

The Asian Church comes first in the increase in vocations. In 1970 it was 26,250; and in 1995 it is 38,636. Africa comes second - in 1970 it was 18,875 and in 1995 it is 23,922. South America is the third - from 36,991 in 1970 to 39,349 in 1995. The statistics of Europe is alarming. Though Europe is the first in the number of ordinations, the death and the desertion have reduced the total number in 1995 to a mere 217,275. In the universal Church since 1990 there is a marginal upward trend in the vocations.

## 2. Frederic Ozanam beatified

Frederic Ozanam, the founder of the society of St. Vincent de Paul was declared blessed by His Holiness Pope John Paul II on 22nd August 1997 in the Notre Dame Cathedral of Paris. He was born on 23rd April 1813 in Lyon as the 5th of the 14 children of his parents. His life span was very short - 40 years. He died on 8th September 1853. He recognised his vocation to help the poor people and so he started the society of St. Vincent De Paul in 1833. As a layman he could easily inspire several young lay people to join him and slowly this society spread to different parts of the world within a short period. At present it has 900,000 members distributed in 47,000 Conferences and in 131 countries rendering charitable services.

## 3. St Little Flower, Doctor of the Church

St Therese of Lisieux has been declared *Doctor of the Church* by His Holiness Pope John Paul II on October 19, 1997. Died at the age of 24, she was declared the Patron of the missions and the Pope chose October 19, the day of the missions, to declare her the Doctor of the Church. She is the third of the female Doctors. The other two are St Therese of Avila and St Catherine of Sienna. The total number of the Doctors is now 33.



#### **4. Ecumenical Dialogue between the Catholic and Malankara Orthodox Syrian Churches held at Kottayam, India**

The meeting between the representatives of the Catholic and Malankara Orthodox Syrian Churches was held at Sophia Centre, Kottayam, Kerala, India from 10 to 14 November, 1997.

Primacy and collegiality, Diamper Synod, Sacraments etc. were the main issues of study and discussion. Some agreement has been reached between the two Churches for removing obstacles for inter Church marriages. Their suggestion has been presented for approval by the authorities of the respective Churches.

The delegation of the Catholic Church was led by Archbishop Pierre Duprey, the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity and the Co-Chairman. The members were Abp. Mar Joseph Powathil, Abp. Cyril Mar Baselios, Bp. Patrik Desouza, Bp. Mar Kuriakose Kunnacherry, Dr. Xavier Koodapuzha, Dr. Matthew Vellanickal, Dr. Geevarghese Chediath, Fr. Bohny Johan and Fr. Giovanni Luca. The Orthodox Church was represented by Metropolitans Philippose Mar Yausebios (Co - Chairman) Thomas Mar Athnasios, Mathews Mar Koorillos, Fr. K. M. George, Rev. Theophorus Ramban, Fr. Jacob Kurian, Fr. V. P. Varghese, Fr. M. O. John, Fr. John Mathews, Fr. John Panickar, Mr. P. G. Abraham and Mr. M. K. Thomas.

The next meeting will be at Spirituality Centre, Kottayam on 26-30 October-1998.

#### **5. Institute for marriage and Family inaugurated at Changanacherry Kerala, India**

The International Institute for marriage and Family was formally inaugurated on 10-11-1997 at Pastoral Centre, Changanacherry by His Excellency Angelo Scola, the Rector of Lateran University and the President of the Pont. Institute for marriage and Family, Rome. The meeting was presided over by His Grace Mar Joseph Powathil the Metropolitan of Changanacherry and the President of the CBCI and attended by several Bishops, Priests, Religious, laymen and laywomen. The Institute will start functioning in CANA near Changanacherry. It is one of the 5 such Institutes in the world - the other Institutes are in Rome, Washington, Mexico and Madrid. This one is meant for the whole of India and Asia. It aims at training people to meet the modern challenges in Family Life. Courses will include areas on Theology, Bible, Morality, Canon Law, Sociology, Psychology, Counselling etc. relating to marriage and Family, and graduate and Postgraduate degrees will be awarded. The doctorate will be given only in the centre at Rome. Dr. Jose Alencherry is the Vice president of the Institute.

#### **6. Mar Thoma Sleeha Ashram approved**

A new Ashram according to the East Syrian Monastic Tradition has been erected at Nallathanny in the diocese of Kanjirappally, South India (cf. Christian Orient, Vol. XVIII, No. 1 (1977) p. 46). It is named Mar Thoma Sleeha Monastery. At this initial stage it will be known as a monastery *sui Juris in Fieri* (pious union) of the Eparchial Right. Rev. Dr. Xavier Koodapuzha, Professor at Paurastya Vidyapitham, Kottayam has been appointed as the Director of the Monastery authorizing him "to admit new members and train them according to the spirit of the monastery in view".



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